A

REVIEW

Of the STATE of the

Antediluvian WORLD:

Wherein is ſet forth

I. The Inconſiſtency of the Imagination of *Præ-Adamites.*

II. From the conciſe Account that *Moſes* gives us of the Poſterity of *Adam* and *Eve*, we may eaſily conclude, that there were Multitudes of their Poſterity on the Earth when *Cain* ſlew *Abel.*

III. From his ſucceeding Accounts may be obſerved that the World was pretty well Peopled even in the Days of *Adam.*

IV. How decay'd Religion was revived by *Seth.*

V. That it was continued in the *Patriarchs* in the Line to *Noah.*

VI. How the Degeneracy from Religion ſpread, and of the *Antediluvian Giants*, and of the *Sons of God* marrying the *Daughters of Men*, &c.

VII. The Goodneſs of God in putting a Stop, by an univerſal Deluge, to thoſe monſtrous Violences that univerſal Wickedneſſes had occaſioned.

To which is added,

A SHORT DISCOURSE upon the *Preaching of Chriſt* to the *Spirits in Priſon*, which were ſometimes diſobedient in the Days of *Noah*, &c.

The PREFACE, containing Directions how the Hiſtorical Parts of the Scriptures ought to be looked upon; and that that Part of the Scriptures, which contains *Laws* and *Precepts*, has not been ſo capable of Corruptions by Tranſcribers, and how to judge of Corruptions by *Commentators*, &c.

All which being carefully obſerved, will make the *Sacred Writings* appear in their trueſt Luſtre.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Rt. Honourable

Ld. Chief Juſtice *LEE*.

My LORD,

AS I have had the Honour of your Lordſhip's kind Reception of my former Works, which I have had the Opportunity to offer to your Lordſhip's Acceptance, ſo your Lordſhip's great Goodneſs and Condeſcenſion in your moſt generous Returns, make me humbly bold to intreat your Lordſhip's Patronage of the ſucceeding Work.

For as the faithful Diſcharge of the great and weighty Truſts committed to your Lordſhip, has juſtly given you that Veneration and Eſteem, throughout his Majeſty's Dominions,

which the circling Annals of Time will never be able to eraſe, ſo your Lordſhip's exceeding Candour amidſt your important Concerns to look into this preſent Undertaking, I doubt not will add to the Succeſs thereof, and cauſe it to be the more readily received and examined into by Men of Judgment and Honour, with whom the Reaſonings herein contained may bear the true Weight that they carry along with them.

And that the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of GOD may hereby be made more manifeſt, and that his Love may the more univerſally reign in the Hearts of Mankind, is the earneſt Deſire of, my LORD, 2 AP 63

Your Lordſhip's

Moſt Dutiful,

Moſt Grateful,

Moſt Devoted,

Humble Servant,

B. PARKER.

THE PREFACE.

THE Sacred Writings may have ſeveral Ways ſuffered abuſe. Firſt, By human Tranſcriptions of the original Copies; Secondly, By different Tranſlations from them; and Thirdly, By the Inadvertency of Commentators upon them.

From whence thoſe divine Oracles have become expoſed to Contempt and Ridicule, even by ſome Men, I would hope, of honeſt Principles, which I cannot mention without Reluctancy, ſince they would otherwiſe ſhine in the brighteſt Luſtre, as I hope to make appear by the Sequel.

For I am perſwaded that Arianiſm, Mahometaniſm, Deiſm, &c. *firſt took their Riſe from the falſe Conſtructions that have been put upon the ſacred Scriptures by thoſe who pretended to ſet forth their divine Authority; becauſe from thence they have pretended that theſe ſacred Writings have ſet forth God's abſolute Decrees of Predeſtination, and a partial Redemption of Mankind: Or that there are ſome that ſh ll, but more that* ſhall not *embrace his Offers of Mercy; and that only thoſe, whom he has peremptorily decreed to ſave,*

ſhall be able to comply with his outward Calls thereto.

But theſe Aſſertors of the Truth of Revelation and Teachers of the divine Will, if they have no better Notions of it, than thereby to deſtroy the true Notions of the Attributes of God, their Readers that have not more diſcerning Judgments to ſee the Falſity of their Reaſoning, may well be drove to Deiſm, or the like; for if the Scriptures were no better to be vindicated, I ſhould myſelf believe them not to be the Word of God. For if I cou'd not ſee that the Scriptures maintained the quite contrary Doctrines, I cou'd never be perſwaded by them, that the ſupreme Being of infinite Juſtice, Truth, and Holineſs, the concomitant Attributes of infinite Perfection, cou'd ever create any Beings upon whom he only deſign'd to exerciſe the moſt intolerable and tyrannical Inflictions of Vengeance, merely from his own abſolute ſovereign Authority, to gratify his own Attribute of Juſtice (as they call it) ſince this wou'd really be ſuch a Way of Proceeding, which amongſt Mankind is condemned as the moſt abominable Injuſtice: But Juſtice always includes Mercy; for a Being that is juſt muſt neceſſarily be merciful, ſince there cannot be any Juſtice in arbitrary Cruelty.

And for any to give God the Titles of Holy, Juſt, Good, and Merciful, and yet to confine his Mercies to a few only, upon no other Terms than his abſolute Decrees, and likewiſe that theſe Decrees ſhall be executed upon the greateſt

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Numbers of his Creatures to glorify himself, by exercising his arbitrary Justice in executing eternal Vengeance upon such who had no Way to escape therefrom, is such a monstrous Paradox in Divinity, that nothing worse cou'd be said, or imagin'd of the Devil, if he had had the Sovereignty to dispose of Mankind.

The Maintainers therefore of these Doctrines must be influenced with a Diabolical Spirit, under the Pretence of an Angel of Light, and a flaming Zeal for Religion, which generally carries them on (when in Power) to Persecutions (for Christ's Sake) whose Doctrines were ever diametrically opposite thereto.

But these, of whom there are Multitudes of Parties, each of them take Care to make themselves of the only Number of the Elect, and such whom God has purposed and decreed to save; and each of them condemn one another, as well as all besides them, that have not imbibed these pernicious Principles!

But in every of these there is a flaming Zeal, contrary to Knowledge, to make Proselytes to themselves, and when in Power, to persecute and destroy all honest Men, who will not run with them to the same Excess of their pretended Sanctity, of which the Devil only can be the chief General, under the Shadow of an Angel of Light; and thereby making Zeal for Religion (thus adulterated) a Screen and a Shelter to cover these hellish Designs.

Hence it is that many Men, I hope of honest Principles, are taken in by this Device of

the Devil, they truly believing that God is a juſt and good Being; and that theſe Attributes do really belong to him, according to our common Conception of them; and to the higheſt Degree without any arbitrary Decrees, from a ſecret Will and Purpoſe, contrary to our common Conception of Goodneſs, Juſtice and Mercy; who for want of being able to ſee thro' the Miſt that has thus been put upon the ſacred Oracles of the Scriptures, by the aforeſaid Abuſes of them, have not thought it an Error to caſt off the Belief of their divine Authority.

And indeed, could it be really proved that the Scriptures did truly maintain ſuch Doctrines as theſe, no honeſt Man, that conceives of the Almighty Being as he ought, or as he really muſt be, a Being of exquiſite Perfection and Purity, *can ever believe that ſuch Doctrines proceeded from himſelf, or had any Commiſſion from his Holy Spirit.*

So that the Titles of God's Attributes are more juſtly conceived of, even by the Deiſts, who, upon the account of the former Enthuſiaſts have caſt off the Belief of Revelation, than by them whoſe Pretences to vindicate it have thereby given the other a Reaſon to deny it.

It is true, theſe Enthuſiaſts, who arrogate God's Mercies to themſelves only, think they have good Reaſon to compliment him with the Titles of his real Attributes of Juſtice, Love, Goodneſs, and Mercy, becauſe they think themſelves under his particular Love and Favour, having the inward Marks and Charac-

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ters clearly wrote within their own Hearts, by that flaming Zeal they feel within to promote the Doctrines of his uncontroulable Authority and Sovereignty, from which he has a Right to execute his Juſtice upon others according to his unalterable Decrees: But they are not concerned to regard the Terrors of his ſovereign Juſtice exerciſed upon the Fatality of others, ſince they were happily included in the Attribute of his Mercy, which is ſufficient for them; and therefore the leaſt Retaliation they can make, is to give him theſe Titles themſelves, and which others, ſay they, cannot deny; ſince his uncontroulable Authority can never be reſiſted.

But that the Doctrines maintained by theſe Zealots are not the Doctrines of the Scriptures, but quite reverſe thereto, I have made plain in moſt of my former Works; and particularly my Preface and Introduction to my Divine Authority of the Scriptures, philoſophically proved; wherein I laid down three Rules, which I think not unworthy of a Repetition; they being deſigned to diſcover wrong Interpretations and Conſtructions of the ſacred Writings, without Recourſe to the original Languages, which themſelves may have ſuffered Abuſe by after Tranſcribers from the firſt original Copies: For I could never obſerve, that Men of Learning in the original Languages, through their ſuffering Abuſe by after Tranſcribers, cou'd, by having Recourſe thereto, be reconciled to one another, but that as many

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Diſputes and Cavils are raiſed amongſt them as others, and therefore far from cloſing the Breach: And wherever the Biaſs of the Judgment is drawn by vicious Morals, or a Spirit of Enthuſiaſm, the greateſt Learning, which ſhould give Direction, is quite loſt, and only Noiſe and Nonſenſe can be from thence expected, as amongſt School-Boys in ſhewing their Excellencies in their Contentions about the Derivations of Words, &c.

But if the three Rules, mentioned in my divine Authority of the Scriptures philoſophically proved, were but impartially obſerved amongſt Mankind, moſt Contentions about the true Intent and Meaning of the Scriptures would certainly be prevented, and their divine Authority allowed. The Rules therein laid down are theſe: In reading the Scriptures, firſt, obſerve the main Scope, Tendency, and Deſign of the Writers of them. Secondly, interpret no dark and obſcure Places in the Scriptures to contradict thoſe that are plain and obvious; and Thirdly, interpret none to contradict the Attributes of God.

And be aſſured, that there are no Parts of the Scriptures, that will not bear a true Interpretation by theſe Rules, but what muſt have ſuffered by Tranſcribers or Tranſlators, and muſt have loſt a divine Sanction: For whatever will not agree with the Attributes of God in the common Tranſlation; in the common Acceptation of Truth, Juſtice, Love, Mercy, and Holineſs, can never be juſtly received

ceived for divine Revelation; ſo that whatever cannot find a Place to be ſo interpreted, muſt either be the Fault of the Tranſcribers of the original Copies, or of our own Tranſlators from them; though many of our Commentators upon them, have lent an helping Hand to depreciate the Beauty of the Dreſs in which our Laws and Precepts, if truly underſtood, do even now appear.

How many Tranſcriptions there may have been of the Law and Prophets amongſt the Jews, before thoſe tranſmitted down to us, which we call Originals, is very uncertain.

But I am perſwaded, that if the Originals of the Law and Prophets, had been truly and impartially tranſcribed, and from thence as purely tranſlated, they would have appeared in ſo harmonious an Order, that their Authority would have carried along ſo bright a Splendor, that none could have had the Opportunity to have expoſed or ridiculed them.

Since even in the preſent Dreſs they appear, there is that divine Authority in their Laws and Precepts, which neither Tranſcribers nor Tranſlators have ever ſo far obliterated (whatever Commentators may have done) but that the very Enemies of Revelation themſelves are forced to acknowledge that they are the beſt Platform of Laws and Precepts that cou'd be poſſibly compoſed; from which it muſt be a neceſſary Inference, that they muſt be more than human Inventions of Prieſtcraft, whatever Prieſtcraft may have, ſince their

firſt Promulgation, been invented to turn them to their ſecular Intereſts.

The Jews *were almoſt always an obſtinate and ſtubborn People, and, whatever* Moſes *wrote of the Hiſtory of them, the Tranſcribers of his Works very plainly appear to have corrupted ſome Parts of his Hiſtorical Relations, though not in the Tranſcriptions of his Laws and Precepts; but that they have introduced ſome of their own Inventions into the Hiſtorical Part thereof, I think may plainly appear by one Inſtance, which may be a Guide to us in other the like Corruptions:* viz. *Where God is brought in to be a Countenancer of their Vices, an Inſtance of which I ſhall give, wherein the latter part of the Hiſtory itſelf makes it evident.*

In the Hiſtory of the Children of Iſrael, *when they were releaſed from* Egyptian *Bondage; in our preſent Tranſcription and Tranſlation of that Hiſtory, we are told that the Children of* Iſrael *borrowed Jewels of Silver and Jewels of Gold of the* Egyptians, *without any Intent to return them: And this Part of the Account, I believe, they had from* Moſes, *the firſt Writer of it: But the other Part, of the Account of God's ordering them to do this, and his Approbation of it, will appear by the Sequel to be afterwards put in by Tranſcribers thereof; becauſe they conceited that whatever Actions were done upon that Deliverance were under the Appointment and Direction of God, whom they ſuppoſed to have the ſame Affections and Paſſions as themſelves.*

But when we conſult the ſubſequent Hiſtory, as we have it from theſe very Tranſcribers, as well as the former Part of it, we may, even from thence, by the Relation itſelf ſee, that the Act was odious, and neither commanded nor encouraged by the Almighty Being of infinite Holineſs and Juſtice.

For this will appear from the Shame they ſuffered in their Diſpoſal of thoſe Jewels of Silver and Jewels of Gold, which they robbed the Egyptians *of, after they had been ſometime in the Wilderneſs; for there, in the Abſence of* Moſes, *they called for Gods to go before them: Upon which,* Aaron *ordered them to ſtrip themſelves of thoſe Jewels and Ear-Rings, which they had borrowed of the* Egyptians, *which, when he received, he melted down into a Lump, which he cauſed to be faſhioned with a graving Tool into the Likeneſs of a Calf; which they fooliſhly and fondly worſhiped, and aſcribed to it the Power of* God, *who brought them out of the Land* Egypt; *For which, when* Moſes *blamed* Aaron, Aaron *told him, that as they had deſired an Idol from him; he, by his Compliance with their Requeſt, had made them naked to their Shame, in ſtripping them of thoſe very Ornaments which they had clandeſtinely robbed the* Egyptians *of, without which Booty they cou'd hardly have been perſwaded to have left* Egypt; *and as this Booty was the chief Means of prevailing upon them to leave* Egypt, *that they might not return their borrowed Ornaments;*

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these rich Ornaments therefore became the very Idol that brought them out of the Land of Egypt, *notwithstanding the Judgments* God *had inflicted upon* Egypt, *to oblige* Pharaoh *to comply to part with them from their Bondage to him: And now as they had desired a visible* God *to go before them,* Aaron *thought proper to strip them of those Idol* Jewels, *of which they had robbed the* Egyptians, *and had already made an* Idol *of in their Hearts; for it was this Booty, which they spoiled the* Egyptians *of, which gave them Satisfaction in leaving of them, and therefore was, in one Sense, the Idol that brought them out of* Egypt. *And this might be permitted by* Moses *upon their Flight from* Egypt, *because he might foresee, that Admonitions to the Contrary* then *would have been in Vain: But upon a proper Opportunity,* Aaron *takes a Method to convince them of their Folly, and that their crafty Delusions should terminate in their own Shame; so that when they asked for a visible* God *to go before them,* Aaron *orders them to bring together all their Jewels, which he melts on a Lump, and fashion'd like a Calf, which they foolishly and fondly worshiped as the* God *that brought them out of the Land of* Egypt.

And thus to strip them of their Idol Jewels, to make them an Idol of, became two Ways to their Shame: First, in losing these their darling Ornaments; and Secondly, so foolishly worshiping them in the Likeness of a Calf,

which

which Deſign Aaron having made known to Moſes, he became excuſable to him.

And after this, there was ſo much Murmuring amongſt them in the Wilderneſs, that the whole Generation of them, that went out of the Land of Egypt, with their wiſhing after their Fleſh-Pots, and wanting to return, cou'd not agree to take poſſeſſion of the Promiſed Land, till that whole Generation of them were dead, who were above twenty Years old, when they left their Bondage, except Caleb and Joſhua.

Moſes, tho' inſpired in writing of ſacred Laws and Precepts, yet he was a Man of the ſame Paſſions and Failings, which are common to human Nature; for God, when he raiſes a Prophet, by whom to deliver his Will, never makes that Prophet an involuntary Machine, or puts any Force upon him, more than another, that he cannot err, of which we have ſufficient Inſtances in many of the notorious Failings of inſpired Writers, particularly of David and Solomon, whoſe Vices are to be ſhunned with Abhorrence, though their Dictates are moſt worthy our conſtant Regard.

So that it may not be improbable that Moſes, from the Importunity of the Children of Iſrael, might not offer to perſwade them to the Contrary, when they were bent upon the Project to borrow theſe Ornaments of the Egyptians without Purpoſe to return them; ſince he might ſee it wou'd be difficult for him to perſwade them to leave Egypt, with only a Proſpect of an Inheritance in the Land of Canaan, which

might

might appear to them no better than removing from England *to* America *would to us, except they could carry off with them ſome of the moſt valuable Treaſures of* Egypt; *they might therefore, I ſay, be permitted by* Moſes *to borrow what they could of them, the Account of which no doubt, he recorded, but I cannot think, that in his original Relation of it, he would ever repreſent God as the Commander of that Action, ſince they were afterwards puniſhed for it to their Shame.*

But that future Tranſcribers of the Hiſtory have taken the Liberty through their own private Sentiments, ſuppoſing God to have the ſame Paſſions as themſelves, that upon their tranſcribing from Moſes's *Relation thereof, they have introduced God as the Orderer of it.*

But if we may judge of what is the Voice of God declared in the Scriptures, it will be eaſily diſcovered, that by comparing one Part by another, and obſerving the three Rules above laid down, it will be natural to diſtinguiſh what is, and what is not corrupted by Tranſcribers, Tranſlators, or Commentators, whereof this one Inſtance may be a Guide to direct us from being led into Errors of this Kind.

And let us ever take Care to aſcribe unto the Fountain of Perfection, ſpotleſs Holineſs, Love, Mercy, Juſtice, and Truth, with whom is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

B. P.

A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE Antediluvian World.

The Introduction.

HAVING in ſeveral of my former Works treated pretty largely upon the Creation and Deluge, and concerning the Fall and Redemption of Man, I ſhall forbear here to repeat what I have formerly obſerved on thoſe Subjects, in ſuch Places as may happen to have a relation to them in the following Work, but ſhall refer you thereto, as they ſhall fall in Courſe.

I ſhall now, chiefly, confine myſelf to enquire into what may be obſerved from the 4th, 5th, and Part of the 6th Chapters of *Geneſis*, and ſee how far a rational Enquiry into them may give an additional Light into

that conciſe Account, which *Moſes* has given us in them of the Antediluvian World.

And in this Undertaking I hope to make it appear, That that Account of *Moſes* will not admit of ſuch an Interpretation as many have put upon it thro' its Conciſeneſs: For,

From his giving us the Names of few of the Poſterity of *Adam* from the Creation to the Flood, ſome have from thence ſuppoſed *Præ-Adamites*; and others, that when *Cain* ſlew *Abel*, they were all the Poſterity that *Adam* and *Eve* were *then* poſſeſſed of, *&c.*

But I ſhall make it appear, that, notwithſtanding the Conciſeneſs of the Hiſtory, there is ſufficient Room from this Hiſtory itſelf to aſſure our ſelves, that when *Cain* ſlew *Abel*, there were Multitudes of *Adam*'s Poſterity on the Earth, and likewiſe many of the Families both of *Cain* and *Abel*; and that therefore, without having Recourſe to *Præ-Adamites*, it was no Wonder why *Cain* expected to be ſlain by *every one* that met him, *Gen.* iv. 14. as may appear from the ſhort Account *Moſes* only confined himſelf to of their Genealogy, from which I ſhall conſider what Numbers of *Adam*'s Poſterity might reaſonably be concluded to be upon the Earth when *Cain* ſlew *Abel*.

Moſes chiefly confined himſelf in his Relation of the Genealogy in the Line of *Adam* to *Noah*, and there are only ſome few Particulars, that happen'd of ſome obſervable Circumſtances, mentioned by him, whereof this of *Cain*'s ſlaying his Brother was one; the Intention whereof

whereof might be, to ſet before Mankind the Odiouſneſs of the Act, and the Puniſhment attending it in his own Conſcience.

For as this was an uncommon Inſtance, which was not to be parallelled amongſt the reſt of Mankind in that early Age of the World, we have it particularly remarked as a Warning againſt ſuch an heinous Act of Violence and Murder, without any Mention of any other of the Births and Circumſtances of *Adam* and *Eve*'s Children till the Birth of *Seth*, or of *Cain*'s Poſterity till after his Exile: No, *Moſes* only gives us a ſhort Account of this Tranſaction of *Cain*'s ſlaying his Brother *Abel*, without any mention of their Families, and alſo a ſmall Account of *Cain*'s Exile, and the Encreaſe of his Progeny after his Baniſhment, with a few of the Names, and ſome of the Tranſactions of his Deſcendants.

And then returns to give us the Line of *Seth* to *Noah*, without any particular Circumſtances of any more of them before the Tranſlation of *Enoch*, Chap. v. ver. 24; and this Account of his Tranſlation is compriſed in this Verſe only.

But it is obſervable, in this lineal Account of thoſe Patriarchs, that when he had told us of the Births of thoſe from whoſe lineal Deſcent *Noah* came, that from *Adam* to *Noah*, theſe Patriarchs lived ſo many hundred Years, and begot Sons and Daughters: But tho' he mentions neither the Names nor Numbers of them, ſhall we not therefore compute their Numbers according to Reaſon?

Shall we ſuppoſe that *Adam* and *Eve* were fruitleſs after having *Cain* and *Abel*, till their next-mentioned Son *Seth*?

CHAP. I.

§ 1. WHEN *Cain* ſlew *Abel*, they were an hundred and twenty-nine Years old each, being Twins, as may be obſerved from *Adam*'s next Son *Seth*, which *Eve* bare to *Adam*; for God, ſaid ſhe, hath appointed me another *Son* inſtead of that which *Cain* ſlew, Chap. iv. ver. 24.

§. 2. For this Son, *Seth*, was born to *Adam*, or begotten by him, when he was an hundred and thirty Years old, Chap. v. ver. 3. which appears to be the next Son *Adam* begot after *Abel* was ſlain. And we may very reaſonably conclude, that *Adam* and *Eve* were never a Year without one Child; for after this, he lived ſeveral hundred Years, and begot Sons and Daughters.

§. 3. Shall we then imagine, that he ſpent an hundred and twenty-nine Years after he begot *Cain* and *Abel*, even ſo much of his Youth, and had no Children between, and yet ſhould beget Sons and Daughters for hundreds of Years afterwards?

I think it very unreaſonable to entertain ſuch an Opinion, ſince, at firſt, he was commanded to be fruitful and multiply, and to repleniſh the Earth: And God, who gave this Com-

mand,

mand, alſo gave him both Power and Inclination to fulfil it.

And as the Earth at firſt, with the firſt Inhabitants of it, according to the common Courſe of Nature would be moſt fertile, ſo we may expect that their Fruitfulneſs would be proportionably anſwerable, as well as the Length of their Lives were; ſo that, as we may obſerve *Cain* and *Abel* to be Twins, it would not be unreaſonable to ſuppoſe that in theſe firſt Ages of the World there might be more frequently double Births than ſingle ones; but to let that be out of the Queſtion, it may ſurely be allow'd a moderate Computation, that *Adam* and *Eve*, and ſuch of their Children as arrived to Maturity, ſhould have one Son or one Daughter every Year, for the Reaſons before given; and this might then be reaſonably continued five hundred Years, as we may reaſonably ſuppoſe them fit for Propagation at twenty Years old, and continue able for it till five hundred and twenty Years, as may be inferred from *Noah*'s begetting his Three Sons, *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japhet*, after he was five hundred Years old.

Now this being allowed a moderate Suppoſition, then between *Cain* and *Abel* till *Seth*, *Adam* and *Eve* would, themſelves, have 64 Sons and 64 Daughters, ſuppoſing, as is moſt likely, an equal Number of Males and Females, before *Cain* ſlew *Abel*.

§. 4. We may alſo allow *Cain* and *Abel* 109 Years capable of begetting Children, and

that they would each of 'em take a Sister to Wife, there being then no other for them: In which Time, according to the above Supposition, they would have each 108 of their own Children; and these by that Time would be branched into 88 distinct Couples, besides their Children that were under 20 or in their Minority; and of these 88 Couples, some being fit for Propagation 88 Years before, and some of them only at that Time, will give the Encrease of 44 Years in the whole; which aforesaid 88 being multiply'd by 44, gives 3872 of *Cain* and *Abel*'s Posterity on the Earth when *Cain* slew *Abel*.

Besides, the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* and *Eve* and their Progenies, at this Time, (which was before observed that their Children might be probably supposed to be 128, and allowing *Cain* and *Abel* each a Wife out of them) 126 would remain, of which we may at least reckon 50 Couples fit for Propagation, of which some had been established fit for it 106 Years, and others only come up to it then; therefore again, take the half Number of 106, *viz.* 53, by which multiply the 50 Couples, and it will shew the Encrease of the Inhabitants from *Adam* and *Eve*, besides *Cain* and *Abel*, to be 2650

and these being added to those sprung from *Cain* and *Abel*, *viz.* 3872

make ——— 6522

Inhabitants on the Earth when *Cain* slew his Brother.

§. 5. So

§. 5. So that if the Encreaſe of one Couple be allowed in 129 Years to be 6522, then, allowing for all accidental Deaths or Miſcarriages, let us only ſuppoſe now 1000 Couples inſtead of 3000 capable of Propagation, and if one Couple might produce 6522 in 129 Years, then 1000 Couples in 129 Years more might produce 6,522,000, the Encreaſe of 258; and according to this Encreaſe, at the 516th Year of the World, while 'tis probable *Adam* might continue to beget Children, there would be 6,522,000,000 of Inhabitants.

Now the Earth's Surface is computed at about 200,000,000 of ſquare Miles on the Surface, and if every Mile, one with another, on Sea and Land were inhabited by 100 of Mankind, then the Number of the Inhabitants would be 20,000,000,000; which Number, even allowing for all accidental Deaths and Detriments which may be probably imagined, might in leſs than 700 Years from the Creation, be upon the Earth.

By this it may be obſerved, that the World might, in ſo ſhort a Time after the Creation, be ſufficiently repleniſhed, and that *Adam* himſelf lived to ſee it ſo repleniſh'd, as to anſwer that Command which God gave him to repleniſh it.

And there is no room to queſtion, but that the Earth, before the Deluge, was much more filled with Inhabitants than ever it has been ſince, or ever will be capable to contain; ſince vaſt Tracts of Land, that no doubt were then

fruitful, were turn'd into Sea by the Deluge. Of which ſee my *Philoſ. Med.* Part 1. Sect 4. and Part 2. Sect. 3.

And we may reaſonably conclude, that the Wickedneſs and Violences that we are inform'd reign'd in the latter Days of the Antediluvian World, cauſed more Depopulations of Towns and Cities than the Wars of the Poſtdiluvians (as monſtrous as they have been) have done ſince.

CHAP. II.

§. 1. THUS I have firſt obſerved, what we may reaſonably ſuppoſe of the Encreaſe and Multiplication of the Antediluvians, as being neceſſary to the ſucceeding Obſervations that I purpoſe to make upon that *Account*, which *Moſes* has given us in the fore-mention'd Chapters of *Geneſis*.

But before I proceed thereto, it may not be improper to conſider a Query that will hence ariſe.

If the Encreaſe and Multiplication of the Earth's Inhabitants may be allow'd ſo great in ſo ſhort a Time, notwithſtanding accidental Deaths and Detriments, Wars and Depopulations, What would there have been, had Man remained in his primitive Purity, and not have ſubjected himſelf and Poſterity to Death? And what muſt then have contained or ſubſiſted them?

Anſ.

Anſ. Their Command was to be fruitful, and multiply, and repleniſh the Earth; and when that was done to the full, the Command was anſwered, and the Propagation muſt *then* either ceaſe, or elſe ſome other Method enſue; as a Removal or Tranſlation of the Inhabitants; which might be in two ways; 1. By removing thoſe who continued in Purity and Uprightneſs by a Tranſlation, as was *Enoch* and *Elias*, which to me ſeems an Example of it; or, 2. It would have been ſo ordered, that ſuch Men, who excelled in ſpiritual Exerciſes, and Elevations above their common Organs of Senſation, would be ſo far raiſed above them, as to put them off and aſcend as ſpiritual Reſurrection-Bodies to ſpiritual Manſions. Of which ſee the laſt Chapter of my *Proſpect into the ſpiritual World.*

But then again, (as I have obſerved in my *Survey of the Six Days Works of the Creation*) if *Adam* had not fallen, his Poſterity muſt have been under the ſame Law he had firſt given him, and have been ſubjected to the Puniſhment of Death for their Tranſgreſſions; and, as I have there made appear reaſonable, could have had no Redemption, becauſe their Treſpaſſes would have been only to themſelves, and could not have involved any but themſelves in the Guilt, and therefore no univerſal Redemption could be wrought for them, as for a whole Race; and it would only then have become juſt to have executed the Sentence of Death upon them immediately, to have put

a Stop to their farther Proceedings, and to their becoming Inſtruments of entailing Corruption on a Poſterity that could have no Opportunity of being ranſomed from their Guilt.

As to the Encreaſe of the reſt of the Animal Creation, the ſame Query may be made, and the ſame Anſwer given, as to the Earth's being ſufficiently repleniſhed with their different Species, which might either then have ceaſed their Propagations, when this Command was anſwered, or their Removals (which I think likelier of the two) inſtead of their now Subjections to Deaths, might have become neceſſary or expedient, in ſuch like manners as were agreeable to their different Species, and leſſer Degrees of Reaſon and Knowledge than Man was deſign'd for, and made capable of, and might accompany thoſe who had been their more particular Governors here, under whoſe Care their Lots had happen'd to fall, and under whoſe Indulgencies they had found that true Satisfaction and Contentment, that nothing cou'd make good to them in the Abſence of ſuch indulgent Governors they had had the Happineſs to be enured to; ſo that it would be their conſummate Pleaſure to be removed with them, by caſting off their preſent Fleſh and Blood, to enjoy the Pleaſures ſubſequent thereupon in a continued Liberty, under the indulgent Government of theſe *Sons of God*.

§. 2. Thus might theſe Queries, I ſay, be anſwer'd for both Man and Animals in theſe ways, agreeable to our preſent Reaſon and Apprehenſion

prehenſion of Things; which tho' it may not happen to anſwer to what might have been the Reſult of Man's Obedience, and his not departing from his primitive Purity; yet we may hereby obſerve, that it is poſſible to frame an Anſwer from Phyſical Reaſoning, how ſuch a State might have anſwer'd the Command of God without Man's Tranſgreſſion to have diſordered the Courſe of Nature, to render the whole ſubject to Viciſſitudes of the Earth, *&c.* Vanities, and Deaths of all the Inhabitants of it.

Thus much in Anſwer to ſome Objections that my former Diſcourſe on this Subject appears to render it liable to.

I have, in my *Divine Authority of the Scriptures Philoſophically proved*, ſpoke pretty largely of Man's Fall and Redemption from the third Chapter of *Geneſis*, to which I refer you, who deſire to ſee what I have ſaid upon it: And ſhall now proceed to take notice of what *Moſes* has recorded of the Antediluvian State in the 4th, 5th, and Part of the 6th Chapters of *Geneſis*.

CHAP. III.

§. 1. I Have, in my *Survey of the Six Days Works of the Creation*, obſerved, Chap. 2. Sect. 7. That *Adam* and *Eve*'s being drove out of Paradiſe, tho' it was a Puniſhment for their Diſobedience, yet it was an infinitely

finitely greater Mercy to execute it than to have reverſed the Sentence, becauſe healed with the Promiſe of a Redeemer, and the Sting of Death taken away.

And this Promiſe being made to them before they had begun to multiply their Species, all that ſhould hereafter deſcend from them, tho' they would partake of their corrupt Natures, yet they ſhould all be entitled to this promiſed Redemption: *Adam* and *Eve* were therefore preſerved from preſent Death, to anſwer God's Command and Permiſſion to be *fruitful and multiply*: In Anſwer to which, *Moſes* tells us, Chap. iv. ver. 1. That *Adam* knew *Eve* his Wife; that ſhe conceived and bare *Cain*, and ſaid, I have gotten a Man from the LORD. Ver. 2. And ſhe again bare his Brother *Abel*; And *Abel* was a Keeper of Sheep, but *Cain* was a Tiller of the Ground. The Account of whom he continues to ver. 16.

This Account of the Births of *Cain* and *Abel*, *Moſes* gives us from their being the firſt of the lineal Deſcendants of the human Race; and by this Account it appears that they were Twins, and the Product of one Conception.

Now, he had no ſooner given the Account of their Births, but he immediately proceeds to their Manhood, and tells us their different Manners of Life, *viz.* That *Abel* was a Keeper of Sheep, and *Cain* was a Tiller of the Ground: And as he takes no notice of their juvenile Years, neither does he take notice of theirs or of *Adam* and *Eve*'s Poſterity, which they had between

between their Births, and of *Cain*'s ſlaying his Brother *Abel*. But the next Son born to *Adam* after that heinous Crime of *Cain*, being that from whom *Noah* the Patriarch of the Poſt-diluvian World deſcended, ſo from him he traces his Line down to *Noah*, with very little notice of the Tranſactions of the Antediluvians, except of their almoſt univerſal Degeneracy and Wickedneſs, which occaſioned their diſmal Overthrow.

But, as before premiſed, in the Accounts *Moſes* has given us of the Genealogy of *Adam* to *Noah*, it is ſaid of all the Patriarchs, that after the Son they happen'd to have in that Line (tho' none of the Children they had before that Son are mention'd) they lived ſo many hundred Years, and begot Sons and Daughters; ſo that, as I obſerved, it cannot be doubted, that from the Time that *Cain* ſlew *Abel*, which was about the 130th Year of their Age, their and their Father and Mother's Poſterity would be very much encreaſed, and numerous Families would be then upon the Earth, ſo that it would then be neceſſary for them to ſpread themſelves into diſtant Plantations, and which *Cain* was obliged to ſoon after the Murder of his Brother *Abel*.

And it appears very probable, that many Families had ſpread themſelves before; ſince, when God pronounced this Puniſhment againſt *Cain*, that he was curſed from the Earth, and ſhould be a Fugitive and a Vagabond in it; or, that his Fact would drive him from the

peace-

peaceable Converſation of his old Acquaintance, and therefore from the *then* habitable Parts of the Earth; and that he ſhould thenceforth have no Aſſiſtance from the reſt of Mankind to procure for him ſuch natural Products that the Earth afforded for the Support of Man's Life and comfortable Subſiſtence, but that he ſhould be left to toil for himſelf till he ſhould raiſe a future Race of his own to aſſiſt him.

This Puniſhment, which God foretold *Cain* would be the natural Reſult of his heinous Crime, ſtrikes him with Terror, and made him cry out, What have I done? the Puniſhment is greater than I can bear, or intolerable, ſince for the future all Men will either avoid my Company, or if they ſhould happen upon it accidentally, they will avenge my Brother's Blood and ſlay me; I muſt therefore betake myſelf to ſome uninhabited Place, and ſpend the reſt of my Time in uncomfortable Terrors and fruitleſs Wiſhes that I had had more deliberate Reflections upon the ſad Conſequences of ſo raſh, ſo vile, and ſo damnable an Act.

Upon ſuch like Reflections he became ſelf-condemned, and experienced an afflicting Puniſhment working upon the inward Faculties of his guilty Conſcience; upon which Regret and Self-Condemnation, God mitigates and ſuſpends his outward Apprehenſion of Puniſhment, and tells him, That his Acknowledgement of his Guilt, and his Remorſe attending him for it, ſhould be a Mark in his Countenance to deter any one from ſlaying him, ſo

far,

far, that whoſoever ſhould do it ſhould have Vengeance taken of him ſeven-fold. For this *Mark*, which is ſaid to be ſet upon *Cain*, I take to be an uncommon Countenance from a guilty, terrified, and, I hope, a penitent Mind; for God always in puniſhing of Sin, does it with a View to reclaim the Sinner; and I am far from ſuppoſing that *Cain* was of any Seed but *Adam*'s, or that he did not belong to the Covenant of Mercy in Chriſt Jeſus.

§. 2. *David* was guilty both of Adultery and Murder, and yet our Predeſtinarians will allow him to be pardon'd; and why? It muſt be becauſe he repented heartily: And according to the ſhort Account of *Cain*'s Murder, *&c.* we have ſufficient Reaſon to believe *he* did the ſame, and with as much Regret and Concern as *David* did, nay, and moſt probably more; for he left the Converſation of Mankind, and went into Exile to the Land of *Nod*, becauſe he was aſhamed to appear in the peopled World, ſince he had no Plea to make for himſelf in committing ſo open and odious an Act of Murder; but tho' *David* repented, and ſecretly watered his Couch with Tears, yet it never drove him from the Converſation of Men, nor from the publick Tranſactions of his Power and Authority in his Kingdom.

And if God's infinite Mercies might be extended to *David*, ſhall we not conclude that they would, upon the ſame Conditions, be extended to *Cain*? ſince we have no reaſon to imagine

imagine that either *Cain*'s Puniſhment or Repentance *here* were at all inferior, but, ſeemingly to me, ſuperior to *David*'s.

So that I cannot but look upon *Cain* to undergo thoſe Puniſhments here, the Views of which produced in him that due Senſe and Weight of his Guilt, as could hardly fail to work up his Mind to a true Contrition and hearty Sorrow; which, from this Account, I think, will appear to all unprejudiced Perſons: And why he ſhould not be Partaker of future Mercy upon the ſame Terms, whereby it is univerſally offered to all, I could never yet diſcover: But it being generally deny'd to *Cain* by both ancient and modern Predeſtinarians, gave *Reve* and *Muggleton* the Opportunity to go a Step farther, and to broach that wild Notion, that *Cain* was the Seed of the Devil; tho' this can ſcarcely be a more extravagant Flight than what might be expected to attend that Doctrine of Predeſtination, or a fatal Neceſſity, tho' ſtill in Vogue to carry on ſome ſiniſter Deſigns of new Prophets and mad Enthuſiaſts, whoſe Errors, I think, I have ſufficiently confuted in ſeveral of my former Works, wherein I have treated on that Subject, as in my *Philoſ. Med.* my *Journey thro' the World*, my *Divine Authority of the Scriptures philoſophically proved*, and my *Survey of the Six Days Works of the Creation*: In which I have treated upon that Subject, but had not a proper Opportunity before to treat upon the Caſe of *Cain* particularly.

§. 3. Now

§. 3. Now in the 16th Verſe of this Chapter, *Moſes* gives us an Account of *Cain*'s Baniſhment from the Preſence of the LORD, or of his being drove out of the Preſence of the LORD; that is, his being drove out of thoſe Parts of the Earth that were then inhabited, and from ſuch Societies which were mutually ſerviceable to one another; and therefore for *Cain* to be drove from ſuch mutual Society, he is ſaid to be drove from the Preſence of the LORD, and muſt therefore now become as an uncomfortable Fugitive and Vagabond; in which State he would naturally regret his vile Action, having no way left but Solitude, to waſh out the Stains of his guilty and terrify'd Mind; ſo that he could only now wear it off by Degrees, as he ſhould hereafter encreaſe his own Family, by which Time his Repentance might again entitle him to enjoy ſuch Pleaſures as might ariſe from the Aſſiſtance of ſuch of his own Progeny that he begot in Exile, and thoſe he might take with him in their Minority; and of ſome of his after Progeny's various Ingenuities we have an Account in the ſucceeding Verſes.

§. 4. Ver. 17. "And *Cain* knew his Wife, "and ſhe conceived and bare *Enoch*: And he "builded a City, and called the Name of "the City after the Name of his Son *Enoch*."

Now we may obſerve, that upon *Cain*'s Baniſhment from the *then* habitable Parts of the Earth, that the firſt Act of *Cain* in his new Setlement, was, that he knew his *Wife*:

From whence it is plain that he had a *Wife* before this Act of Murder and Baniſhment for it, and this Wife of *Cain*'s accompanied him in his Exile and Solitude. And tho' he had numerous Children before, and they branched into numerous Families; yet as this Act of *Cain*'s had excluded even thoſe ſprung from his own Loins, except ſuch of his Children as might be in their Minority, whom, with his Wife, he might alſo take along with him to this Land of *Nod*, *Moſes* makes no Mention of *them*, but proceeds to tell us, that in this new Abode *Cain* knew his Wife, and ſhe conceived and bare *Enoch*, being the firſt Son born to *Cain* in his Exile.

Now *Cain*, upon ſettling here, finds that the only Society he could hereafter expect, muſt be amongſt his own future Progeny; and tho' *Moſes* is ſilent in taking notice of the juvenile Years of his Son *Enoch*, yet he tells us, that *Cain* builded a City, and called it by the Name of *that* Son whom he firſt begot in this new Plantation; and which City, no doubt, was enlarged as Inhabitants from *Cain*'s Poſterity encreaſed, which, in all Probability, would be anſwerable to their Encreaſe, as before obſerved, from the Beginning of the Encreaſe of the World by *Adam* and *Eve*, tho' *Moſes* confines his Account only to a few of *Cain*'s Line, and a few of his lineal Deſcendants to the ſeventh Generation from *Adam*.

Verſe 18. "And unto *Enoch* was born "*Irad*: And *Irad* begat *Mahujael*, and *Ma-*

"*hujael*

" *hujael* begat *Methuſael*, and *Methuſael* be-
" gat *Lamech*." And we may reaſonably conclude, that by the Birth of this *Lamech*, the City of *Enoch* would be very much repleniſhed and enlarged with Families and Inhabitants, and alſo that there would be adjacent Towns and Villages, and that then, even thoſe of *Cain*'s new Race, in his Exile, would form themſelves into Societies, and begin to improve themſelves in uſeful, delightful, and profitable Arts and Sciences; of which *Moſes* gives a ſhort Account in the next Generation of the Children of *Lamech*, ſeveral of whom he mentions by Name, as,

§. 5. Verſe 19. " And *Lamech* took unto
" him *two* Wives, *Adah* and *Zillah*—Ver. 20.
" And *Adah* bare *Jabal*; he was the Father of
" ſuch as dwell in Tents, and of ſuch as have
" *Cattle*. Ver. 21. And his Brother's Name
" was *Jubal*; he was the Father of all ſuch as
" handle the *Harp* and *Organ*.

Verſe 22. " And *Zillah*, ſhe alſo bare *Tu-*
" *bal-Cain*, an Inſtructor of every Artificer in
" *Braſs* and *Iron*; and the Siſter of *Tubal-Cain*
" was *Naamah*."

Here are three Sons mentioned of *Lamech*, with the particular Branches of their Arts and Occupations; in which, no Doubt, they had made Improvements of what had been before projected, ſince they are mentioned as *ſuch*, who excelled in thoſe Performances, as being ſtiled the *Fathers* of ſuch as ſhould hereafter ſucceed in the Proſecution of the ſaid *Arts* and *Occupations*.

It is obſervable, that with the third Son mentioned of *Lamech*, *Moſes* takes notice of a Siſter belonging to him; which being particularly mentioned as *his* Siſter, I think, plainly intimates that ſhe was born with that Brother at one Birth, and that they were Twins, and that there were ſcarcely any of them called Brothers and Siſters, but *ſuch* as were ſo born.

§. 6. Thus *Moſes* having given us a ſhort Account of the Poſterity of *Cain*, ſo far that we may gather from it, that by the Time of *Lamech*, there was a vaſt Encreaſe of *Cain*'s Progeny in his Exile: He proceeds to give us an Account of *Lamech*'s Boaſting to his *two* Wives, as in Verſe 23. "And *Lamech* ſaid "unto his Wives, *Adah* and *Zillah*, Hear "my Voice, *ye* Wives of *Lamech*, hearken "unto my Speech: For I have ſlain a Man "to my Wounding, and a young Man to my "Hurt: If *Cain* ſhall be avenged ſeven-fold, "truly *Lamech* ſeventy and ſeven-fold."

Now this Account of *Lamech* having *two* Wives, is the firſt Account that we have in the *Moſaic* Hiſtory of any ſuch Tranſaction amongſt the *Antediluvians*, particularly, but we may have Reaſon, from that Hiſtory, to believe that Polygamy was practiſed in that State of the World, as well as it was afterwards, as I ſhall take notice in its proper Place: But, as I obſerved, this is the firſt Account of ſuch a Tranſaction *then*, and which we may reaſonably ſuppoſe was not before common: For, as I obſerved in my *Survey of the ſix*

Days

Days Works of the Creation, Chap. 20. Sect 3. That the firſt Inſtitution of Marriage was deſign'd to be a perpetual Obligation of Truth, Fidelity, and Conſtancy between *one* Male and *one* Female, without Polygamy, or promiſcuous Acts of Generation; and that our bleſſed Saviour reproved all Deviations therefrom, and commanded an Obſervation of its firſt Inſtitution.

Therefore *Lamech*'s having *two* Wives muſt be *then* an uncommon Act; and his other Acts of ſlaying a Man to his Wounding, and a young Man to his Hurt, moſt likely was, ſome way or other, an Effect relating to his having two Wives.

For if we conſider the Nature of his boaſting of it, and to whom he directed his Speech, "Hear my Voice, *ye Wives* of *Lamech*, hear-"ken unto my Speech," I think we may reaſonably conclude, that he had done it in Defence of that Right, which he imagined he had gain'd in and over them both; which *they*, whom he had ſlain, might have judged an Uſurpation of what he could not lawfully defend, in having more than *one* Wife; but as he had, contrary to the *then* common Method, taken *two*, theſe Men might, upon that Occaſion, claim as much Right to one or both of them as himſelf: For he having *two*, they might diſpute his having any Right to either, and therefore contend to take them both from him by Force, and each enjoy one of them themſelves; which would appear

more reaſonable in *them*, than his Arrog nce could do in *him*, to take *two* to himſelf, thereby to enſlave *both*: For ſuppoſing both to be wholly confined to him, they muſt naturally undergo more Pain than Pleaſure, by being *both* his Wives; ſince they, perhaps, might have been as capable to have pleaſed two Huſbands, as he was to pleaſe two Wives *: I ſay, this might be reaſon'd by ſuch, who might have an Inclination to rival *Lamech* out of his *two* Wives; and they might alſo, upon this Account, have a fair Pretence, hereby to releaſe theſe his *two* Wives from that Bondage, that *one* Man's Pretenſions or Claim to them *both*, had enſlaved them to.

And we muſt in Reaſon allow, that any Men, who would give themſelves the Liberty of Mind to covet other Mens Wives, might be encouraged to expect that they could ſooner prevail upon ſuch Women, that had only *one* Part of a Huſband's Affections and Endearments, than upon any that had ſolely the Affections and Endearments of an Huſband to herſelf.

So that it could be no Wonder that ſome officious Sparks ſhould chuſe to offer their Aſſiſtance to *one* or *both* of his Wives, to deliver them from their preſent Subjection and uncommon Bondage of *two* to *one*.

And

* The Act of Polygamy was always an unreaſonable Act, and was never deſigned in the Order of Nature, but only gain'd in the World thro' the vicious Inclinations of the corrupt and depraved Nature of Men.

And that this was the Caſe between *Lamech* and the two Men whom he ſlew, appears moſt probable, if we obſerve, as before noted, from his Application to his *two* Wives, after he had ſlain them.

" Hear my Voice, *ye Wives of Lamech*, " hearken unto my Speech; for I have ſlain a " Man to my Wounding, and a young Man " to my Hurt." Now this Speech being only made to his *two Wives*, in all Likelihood, it might be becauſe thoſe two Men whom *Lamech* had ſlain, had been making ſome Attempts to rival him in the Enjoyment of one or both of them, ſince his Exceſs, in arrogating *two* to himſelf, was leſs excuſable in him, than it could be in them to attempt to deliver his *two Wives* from their Bondage and Slaveries, which his pretended Right to them *both* had laid them under; which muſt be an Uſurpation on the *one*, and an Abuſe upon *both*. Theſe Pretenſions of *Lamech*'s two Rivals, I ſay, moſt probably was the Cauſe of the Quarrel that aroſe between him and them.

And tho' their firſt Deſigns herein might for ſome Time remain unobſerved by him, yet before they could compleat them, their Attempts muſt grow more obvious; ſo that *Lamech* at laſt diſcovers the Intrigue, and being reſolved to vindicate himſelf in what he had aſſumed, and to maintain his Right in both his Wives, reſolves to do it againſt all Oppoſition, and, either by open Force or Stratagem,

to hazard his Cauſe: And this alſo his Rivals reſolved to try, rather than to give up their Reſolutions to oppoſe his Arrogance and Uſurpation, (juſt as ſome of our modern hot-brain'd Men will, in the Phrenſy of their Humours, expoſe their Lives for their Miſtreſſes) ſo that hereupon a furious and deadly Duel enſues between *Lamech* and his *two Rivals*, in which *Lamech*, either thro' a ſuperior Strength, or a more artful and premeditatedly contrived Stratagem, probably unawares to them from the Concealment of his Knowledge of their Intentions, overcomes them both, to his only receiving a Wound from the one, and a ſlight Hurt from the other.

Now this Application, or Speech to his two Wives, will naturally bear this Conſtruction. "Hear my Voice, *ye* Wives of *Lamech*, hear-"ken unto my Speech; for I have ſlain a "Man to my Wounding, and a young Man "to my Hurt." Therefore now be convinced of my Valour, and of my extraordinary Love to you, which has raiſed that extraordinary Courage and Reſolution in me to maintain my Right to you *both* againſt a double Oppoſition.

"If *Cain* ſhall be avenged ſeven-fold, truly "*Lamech* ſeventy and ſeven-fold:" For my Act, of ſlaying theſe *two* Men, can never be accounted of ſo heinous a Nature, by a tenth Part, as *Cain*'s ſlaying his Brother *Abel*, becauſe theſe gave me not only a Provocation to enflame my Rage againſt them, but alſo attempted

tempted to have overcome and ſlain me; but as they have not prevailed, and I have ſlain them, if *Cain* ſhall be avenged ſeven-fold upon any that ſhall ſlay him for the ſlaying of his Brother, truly then, as my Act of ſlaying theſe two Men, in my own Defence, cannot be of ſo heinous a Nature, by a tenth Part as *Cain*'s was; therefore if *Cain* ſhall be avenged ſeven-fold, truly *Lamech*, if any ſhall ſlay him for this Act, Vengeance ſhall be taken on him, or them, ſeventy and ſeven-fold, or ten Times more.

§. 7. That Conſtruction, which ſome Commentators have put upon *Lamech*'s ſlaying of two Men, *viz.* that one of them was *Cain*, on whom Vengeance ſhould be executed by his ſeventh Deſcendant, does not in the leaſt agree with the Account we have thereof, there not appearing therein any Tendency to frame ſuch a Suppoſition therefrom, but the quite Reverſe ſeems demonſtrable from the very Account we have of it: For if this Act had been only an Act for executing Vengeance upon *Cain* for the Murder of his Brother *Abel*, what other young Man could be concerned to have ſuffered for it beſides himſelf?

Alſo let it be conſidered, that when *Cain* acknowledged his Guilt, and expreſſed his Terror of every one that met him would ſlay him, God's Anſwer to him was, "Whoſo-"ever ſlays *Cain*, Vengeance ſhall be taken of "him ſeven-fold;" which could not ſignify leſs than a full Pardon from being ſlain at all

for

for the Murder, and a Baniſhment only inflicted as his full Puniſhment: So that had *Cain* been one of thoſe whom *Lamech* ſlew, the very Sentence of God would have been againſt him, that Vengeance ſhould have been taken upon him for that Murder ſeven-fold greater than that was, which was inflicted upon *Cain*; and therefore for *Lamech* to have ſlain his *four Times* Great-Grand-Father, would have incurred a ſeven-fold Puniſhment upon himſelf, inſtead of being of a ten-fold leſs heinous Nature: So that there does not in the leaſt appear, to me, that one of thoſe whom *Lamech* ſlew could be his Anceſtor *Cain*; but the Caſe rather appears to be as before ſurmiſed, becauſe it carries in it a true Connection with the very Intent of the Relation; but the other, as plain a Contradiction to it.

This being all the particular Account *Moſes* has given us of the Poſterity of *Cain*, he returns to give us an Account of *Adam*'s Line to *Noah*, in which tho' he is very conciſe, yet it is ſo very well adjuſted, that there is ſufficient Room to judge of Cauſes from mention'd Effects, and of Effects from mention'd Cauſes: And this ought to be our Guide, where we attempt to carry our Searches farther than the Object ſearched after lies plain to the View.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

§ 1. IN the two laſt Verſes of the 4th Chapter of *Geneſis*, *Moſes* returns to give us an Account of the Genealogy of *Adam*'s Line to *Noah*, but concludes this Chapter with only the Mention of his Son *Seth*, and that Son of *Seth* whom he named *Enos*, who continued the Line of Succeſſion to *Noah*. As,

Ver. 25, and 26. "And *Adam* knew his "Wife again" (as, no Doubt, he had done many a Time in 130 Years, between *Cain* and *Abel*, and *Seth*) "and ſhe bare (another) Son "and called his Name *Seth*: For God, *ſaid* "*ſhe*, hath appointed me another Seed inſtead "of *Abel*, whom *Cain* ſlew.—And to *Seth*, "to him alſo there was born a Son; and he "called his Name *Enos*: Then began Men "to call upon the Name of the LORD."

Now in the 3d Verſe of the ſucceeding Chapter we have the particular Account of *Adam*'s *Age* when he begat *Seth*, being, as before noted, 130 Years; and from the former Accounts I have obſerved, that this Son *Seth* was the next Son *Adam* had after *Cain*'s ſlaying his Brother *Abel*, and was therefore received by *Eve* as in his Stead, to whom it might moſt probably be reveal'd, that from his Seed ſhould come the *Promiſed Meſſiah*; as afterwards it might be in all the Line of Patriarchs

triarchs to *Noah*, as is moſt probable from having their lineal Deſcent only recorded.

§. 2. But hitherto we have no Account of religious Worſhip amongſt either the Poſterity of *Adam*'s, *Cain*'s or *Abel*'s, after the acceptable Sacrifice of *Abel*, and which rather ſeems by the Account of this laſt Verſe that it had lain dormant and been neglected, than that there had been made any public Practice of it; becauſe it is here obſerved, that after *Seth* had begot a Son, whom he called *Enos*, that *then began* Men to call upon the Name of the LORD.

So that if it was *then* that Men *began* to call upon the Name of the LORD, it is plain that this Practice had been before neglected.

Indeed the Practice of Religion, in ſome Shape or other, might have been made uſe of in the Interval between *Cain*'s ſlaying *Abel*, and the Birth of *Enos*; but not to that Degree of Purity, to which *Seth*, upon the Birth of his Son *Enos*, did reſtore it; ſince it was upon the Birth of his Son *Enos*, that *then* Men *began* to call upon the Name of the LORD.

Now it may be eaſy to conclude, that *Seth* was a Man of a religious Diſpoſition, and had been inſtructed in the Knowledge of the Promiſe of a *Meſſias*, who ſhould deliver Mankind from the Effects that his Father and Mother's Diſobedience had involved their Progeny in; and that theſe Inſtructions had a powerful Influence upon him, and engaged him to a Conformity to ſuch Duties which were enjoined

to

to Man fallen from his primitive Purity, whereby to qualify himſelf to be a Partaker of the Advantages of this Redemption: But this religious Diſpoſition was decay'd in the greateſt Part of Mankind, whoſe Views of long Lives had cauſed them to ſet their Affections only on preſent Enjoyments, and to caſt off their Thoughts of a future State. But *Seth*, who was the firſt *Son* born to *Adam* and *Eve* after *Abel* was ſlain, his Mother received him as in *Abel*'s Stead, and would therefore particularly inſtruct him in the Uncertainty of the Affairs of human Life, and the Subjection we are here continually under to be diſinherited of the preſent material Habitations of our Bodies; and that this was very obvious from *Cain*'s bloody Act of Violence in ſeparating his Brother's Soul from his Body, even when his Body would have been a capable Habitation for it ſeveral hundred Years longer.

And *Seth* joyfully embracing this good Education, we may reaſonably believe, that the Spirit of God would have a proportionate Influence upon him, and that, as in thoſe Days there did not appear any Government, but what God himſelf was immediately concerned in; ſo ſuch a Man as *Seth* might be entruſted to have ſome Secrets committed to him of God's Purpoſes, from his Foreſight of an univerſal Degeneracy, to ſend an univerſal Overthrow; and that God might, at the Time of this Son's Birth, inſpire *Seth* with the Spirit of Prophecy, whereby to foretell to his

his Friends and Acquaintance, who were aſſembled to celebrate his Son's Birth, as a Feſtival, that from *this* Son would proceed *one* of his Race, that, with a few of his own Family *only*, would eſcape an *otherwiſe* univerſal Overthrow, which would come upon the World, for their univerſal Infidelity and Wickedneſs; and that therefore, in this Child's Seed it would be, that the *Meſſias* ſhould appear to ſave Mankind, from the Beginning to the End of it.

So that upon the Feſtival, that *this* Son's Birth had occaſioned, the Father *then* being influenced by the Spirit of Prophecy, as before premiſed, he might thereby, not only attempt, but bring about ſuch a Reformation in religious Worſhip, as might have been long neglected amongſt the Generality of Mankind, from their Diſregard and Forgetfulneſs of the Promiſe of a Redeemer.

For as *Seth* was 105 Years old when he begat *this* Son, and had always been religiouſly inclined, ſo we may conclude, that the World was not *then* ſo corrupted as not to have a Veneration, at leaſt, for Men of virtuous and religious Principles; and therefore as *Seth* was a Man of particular Notice and unblemiſhed Character, he might thereby have ſo great an Influence upon his Relations and Acquaintance, whom he had invited to celebrate the Feſtival of *this* Son's Birth, as to bring them to a Compliance to correct their former Diſregard to the Exerciſe of pure Religion, and Practice

of

of true Virtue. So that they, by a general Aſſent, put themſelves into mutual Societies, and thereupon form a preſcribed Model of divine Worſhip amongſt them, agreeable to the firſt or original Inſtitution thereof from the Promiſe of a Redeemer.

And from thence they might be cloſely united in the Practice thereof, and continue their preſent Engagements during the Lives particularly of thoſe who were thus engaged, thro' their then clear Convictions: But how afterwards a Degeneracy was begun, and univerſally ſpread, may be obſerved from the latter Accounts of this Work.

CHAP. V.

I Shall next make ſome Obſervations on what *Moſes* has recorded in the 5th Chapter of *Geneſis*; wherein we have chiefly the Account of *Adam*'s Line to *Noah*; and the Righteouſneſs and Tranſlation of *Enoch*.

In the 1ſt and 2d Verſes of this Chapter, *Moſes* returns (by a beautiful Tautology and Improvement of his former Accounts) to the Creation of *Adam* and *Eve*, and tells us,

Ver. 1. "This is the Book of the Genera-
" tion of *Adam*:—In the Day that God
" created *Man*: In the Likeneſs of GOD
" made HE him.

Ver. 2. "Male and Female created he them,
" and bleſſed them, and called *their* Name
" *Adam*,

"*Adam*, in the Day when they were created."

§. 1. In my *Survey of the ſix Days Works of the Creation*, I have pretty largely conſidered Man's being made in the Image of God, and his alſo being made Male and Female, as in Chap. 20. Sect 1. I ſhall therefore now only take notice from theſe Verſes, of God's calling their Name *Adam*, which ſome Men ſtumble at, as incoherent: But, that there is no Incoherence therein, will eaſily appear, if we conſider that the Word *Name* bears not its Relation to *them* and *their*, but to *Adam*, that follows; which was the Name they were called by; ſince tho' they were created Male and Female, yet there is but one ſingle Name here aſſigned them. Thus if we were to ſpeak of a whole Family of Children deſcended from Parents, their Family Name, all their Deſcendants are at firſt entitled to. Thus we ſhould properly ſay, of ſuch a Family, their Name is *Radford*, tho' the ſeveral Branches of the Family have every one another Name to diſtinguiſh them in Reference to their Particularities, as well as the Female, that was taken out of *Adam*, and united to him to be his Help-meet and ſociable Companion, did afterwards alſo receive her particular Name, *Eve*.

Thus every one, now-a-days born, are entitled to the general Name of the Family they deſcend from, before their particular Name is given them: And many of theſe general Names have been brought into Families from ſome of their Anceſtors particular Names;

and

and tho' it has been frequent, that when they have made their particular Name general to a ſucceeding Race, to add thereto *s* or *ſon*, as *James Williams*, *Samuel Richardſon*, yet ſome particular Names have been made general without that Addition, as *Joſeph Paul*, *Robert Francis*, *&c.* Thus alſo every Man taking a Wife, the Wife is immediately entitled to the general Name of her Huſband; it cannot appear out of the Way that *Eve* was entitled to the Name of her Huſband, and that it ſhould become a general Name to his whole Family, eſpecially in their Minorities, tho' other occaſional Names might afterwards be given to the Branches thereof as they became ſeparated: But that *Adam*'s particular Name (he then having no other) it is moſt probable deſcended to his Children, as well as his Wife's being entitled to it, as *Eve Adam*, *Cain Adam*, *Abel Adam*, *Seth Adam*, &c.

§. 2. And now in the reſt of this 5th Chapter, *Moſes* immediately proceeds to give us a ſhort Account of *Adam*'s Line to *Noah*, and then returns to his Son *Seth*, from whom *Noah* by lineal Deſcent ſucceeded; and that this was the Son born to *Adam* the next after *Cain* had ſlain his Brother *Abel*, has been before taken notice of; and of *Adam*'s being 130 Years old when he begat him, *&c.* Afterwards *Moſes* goes on to inform us, in

Verſe 4. " And the Days of *Adam* after he " had begotten *Seth*, were 800 Years, and he " begat Sons and Daughters.

Verſe 5. "And all the Days that *Adam* "lived were 930 Years, and he died."

And the lineal Deſcent from him to *Noah* may be obſerved from the following TABLE, wherein is readily ſhewn,

The Year of the World wherein they were born, the Length of their Lives, and the Year of the World wherein they died.

Their Names.	Year of the World when born.	Lived Years.	Year of the World died in.
Adam	Not born, but created.	930	930
Seth	130	912	1042
Enos	235	905	1140
Cainan	325	910	1235
Mahalaleel	395	895	1290
Jared	460	962	1422
Enoch	622	365	Died not, but tranſlated in 987
Methuſelah	687	969	1656
Lamech	874	777	1651
Noah	1056	Aged at the Deluge, 600	The Deluge, and the Year of the World in which *Methuſelah* died, 1656

I need not here repeat the occaſional Remarks I have before made upon the numerous Progeny, that may be reaſonably concluded would, even in *Adam*'s own Days, be upon

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the Earth, from the Numbers of Children that might ſpring from them, and theirs, of which *Moſes* gives us no Account either of their Names or Numbers: Nor need I to take notice in particular of what he relates of the Succeſſion of the Line from *Adam* to *Noah*, any otherwiſe than that general Obſervation of the Length of their Lives, and that particular Account of *Enoch*'s Tranſlation; and what may be reaſonably obſerved from theſe Accounts, I ſhall proceed to conſider.

§. 3. And firſt, it is obſervable that *Seth* was 105 Years old when he begat *Enos* his *Son*, that happen'd in Succeſſion to *Noah*. Now *Adam* being 130 Years old when he begat *Seth*, then muſt the World be 235 Years old when *Enos* was born, and then, as before obſerved, it was that *Men* began to call upon the *Name* of LORD. And at that Age of the World, according to my moderate Computation of the Numbers of Inhabitants, that would probably be upon the Earth in 258 Years, as in the 1ſt Chap. and 5th Sect. of this Diſcourſe, there might, at the Birth of *Enos*, moſt probably be four or five Millions.

And as there had been very few Deaths in theſe Years, ſo Religion and the Thoughts of a future State, with the Promiſe of a Redeemer, began to ſlip out of the Minds of moſt Men, notwithſtanding they had been inſtructed in the Knowledge thereof in their juvenile Years, and eſpecially thoſe who immediately ſprung from *Adam* and *Eve*, who

to be ſure, would very well remember the feeling Conſequences of their Diſobedience, and the healing Effects of their promiſed Redemption.

But by this Account of Religion's being reſtored at this Age of the World, it muſt neceſſarily imply, that it had been before decay'd.

For we find, by ſad Experience, even in this Age, how common it is for many Men to degenerate from their infant Innocency, and juvenile Education, to Infidelity and a Diſregard of the good Inſtructions they firſt received; even tho' now our Lives are ſo far ſhortened to what theirs were then, that, in the general, they may be ſaid to be Ten to One leſs, if we only regard the common Ages of thoſe who live to 70 or 80 Years, whereas it is almoſt Ten to One againſt any that now come into the World living to thoſe Ages.

May we not then reaſonably imagine, that the Length of their Lives, and the few Deaths they ſaw or heard of, might make them the more ſecure in their Diſregard to their firſt Inſtructions, and to throw off the Innocency of their Infancy and juvenile Education; and when they became ripe, to have followed their firſt Inſtructions in Religion and Virtue, they threw that off to follow their own corrupt Inclinations? And this may reaſonably be imagin'd, ſince the daily repeated Deaths of both Old and Young now, can awaken but few to a conſtant Regard to true Religion and Piety.

Yet

Yet ſtill we find that as there are *now* ſome, even not a few, tho' too few, that oppoſe Irreligion and Vice in the World, ſo *then* there were found ſome, tho', I believe, much fewer than now, (as few as they are) to oppoſe the Current of Vice and Infidelity.

Of which we have this particular Inſtance and Example of *Seth*, at the Birth of his Son *Enos*, as before obſerved, by whoſe Authority, Exhortations, and prophetical Declarations of the diſmal Effects of Vice, it appears that *then* Men began to call upon the Name of the LORD; and we may conclude, that *then* Multitudes were brought back to a ſerious and religious Way of thinking, and to enter into ſome religious Forms of Worſhip, thereby to eſtabliſh their preſent Tranquillity at leaſt, and to prevent ſuch Judgments and Ruine as were naturally inherent and attendant upon a Degeneracy from Religion and Virtue. But tho' Religion was never totally extinguiſhed in the antediluvian World, yet we find, at laſt, that only eight Perſons were ſaved from, otherwiſe, an univerſal Overthrow and Deſtruction of the whole human Race.

§ 4. But before this almoſt univerſal Degeneracy, which we are acquainted with, we have, in the farther Account of *Adam*'s Line to *Noah*, a particular Relation of the Righteouſneſs and Tranſlation of *Enoch*, who was the Seventh from *Adam* in that Line, and was born when *Adam* was 622 Years old: So that it was then 387 Years after the Birth of

Enos, when Men began to call upon the Name of the LORD; and therefore the Obſervance of Religion was ſo confirmed by *Seth*, that the Practice thereof was continued, at leaſt, during the Lives of all thoſe who were the Embracers of it *then*; ſo that we may conclude the Foundation was ſtrong, and well laid, and that it was not built upon hypocritical Views.

For after this Time of its Re-eſtabliſhment, we find it tranſmitted down in its Strength and Purity to *Seth*'s ſixth Deſcendant, and ſo far to influence the Life of *Enoch* with a true and upright Heart, that his Affections were ſo placed on Things *above*, that the Earth cou'd no longer confine him to material Laws, nor any longer exact a Tribute of Gravitation from his material Organs of Fleſh and Blood, above which his Spirit, being highly elevated, his material Organs were ſo far changed, as to their heterogeneous Subſtances, that nothing remaining therein but what belonged to the ſpirituous Influence that conſtituted the Coheſion of his bodily Subſtance, without the common Method of leaving the ſpirituous and material Subſtance of his Body by Death, by a divine Elevation of his Spirit, and by God's peculiar Favour and Appointment, his natural Body was changed into a ſpiritual Body, which cou'd then no longer be confined to material Laws, but leaving its Subjection thereto, aſcends to the ſpiritual World, to enjoy thoſe Treaſures upon which his Heart had been

been ſo fixed, as to draw his Spirit thither before the earthly Tabernacle of his Body was decay'd by Age, or he unwillingly drove out of it by Accident; but by the extraordinary Advancements of his ſpiritual Flights, *truly directed*, he leaves every Thing that belonged to the World; and being no longer confined to material Laws, enters upon a ſpiritual Liberty to view and enjoy thoſe Objects in that ſpiritual Light, which during his Confinement in the Body, while it was in a natural State, he had only obſcurely viewed, and impatiently aſpired after, by *walking with God*, or by ordering all his Actions and Tranſactions as under his continual Inſpection, and proportioning of them ſo that they might be worthy of his Approbation.

And as God's communicable Attributes of Goodneſs, Love, Mercy, and Purity are proportion'd to all Men as they become qualify'd to receive them; ſo by *Enoch*'s conſtant Integrity in *thus* walking with God, (while he begat ſeveral Children, Sons and Daughters, 300 Years after he begat *Methuſelah*) the Attributes of God's Goodneſs, Love, Mercy, *&c.* were reflected upon him with that Efficacy, that by a powerful Influence they ſuppreſſed all the heterogeneous Weights of his material Organs which tended to the Earth, and exhaled all thoſe homogeneous and ſpirituous Parts, that before continued the Coheſion of his bodily Organs along with his ſpiritual Affections, to take a full Poſſeſſion of that ori-

ginal Fountain of Perfection, to whom his Affections had been ſo long aſpiring.

Of the Tranſlation of *Enoch* in the Ante-diluvian World, and of *Elijah* in the Poſt-diluvian; See farther a Remark in Chap. ii. Sect. 1. of this Diſcourſe, and Chap. vi. Sect. 2. of my *Proſpect into the ſpiritual World.*

§. 5. Now it may be obſerv'd, that in this Line of *Adam* to *Noah*, every one of theſe Patriarchs preſerved a true Value for, and a particular Regard to Religion and Virtue; whatever their other Deſcendants might do, of whom we have no particular Accounts; but many of them, we have Reaſon to imagine, were drawn into the common Current of Infidelity, and a Diſregard to the Exhortations of their Parents: But that religious Worſhip was conſtantly preſerved amongſt the *Patriarchs* in this *Line*, appears from the few Inſtances that we have of it, in ſome of their remarkable Excellencies, from whom *Noah* received, embraced and continued in it to the Preſervation of himſelf, and *three* of his Sons, who embraced his Inſtructions, with their Wives, from the common Deſtruction.

Seth was the firſt Son that *Adam* had, who revived the Practice of Religion and Virtue after the Murder of *Abel*, that we have any Account of; how many of his other Children might embrace it, as we are neither acquainted with their Names nor Numbers, ſo we have no Account of that; but by the Account of his Deſcendants to *Noah*, we have

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the greateſt Reaſon to believe, that there was not one of thoſe *Patriarchs* who ever caſt it off.

Seth lived to ſee his Deſcendant *Enoch*, of his ſixth Generation, tranſlated to Heaven for his Righteouſneſs, and 55 Years afterwards; and none but *Adam* of that Line were dead when he was tranſlated, and only 57 Years before that moſt remarkable Tranſaction.

And as the Earth was not worthy of him, ſo he was removed from it to heavenly Manſions, which wou'd be a ſtrong Confirmation to thoſe who had happily made their Choice of Religion and Virtue to continue therein, and never to deviate therefrom.

§. 6. Now when *Enoch* was tranſlated to Heaven, his Grandſon *Lamech* was 113 Years old, and of him we have a particular Account concerning a Prophecy upon the Birth of his Son *Noah*, 69 Years after the Tranſlation of his Grandfather *Enoch*: From which we may alſo obſerve, that Religion and ſpiritual Virtues, and the Exerciſe thereof, never departed from this Line.

For, upon the Birth of his Son *Noah*, the Spirit of Prophecy came upon him, by which he foretold, "This ſame Son ſhall comfort us "concerning the Work and Toil of our "Hands, becauſe of the Ground which the "Lord had curſed." *Gen.* Ch. v. Ver. 29.

Now this Prophecy of *Lamech* I have pretty largely conſider'd in the 2d Sect. of my 2d Part of *Philoſophical Meditations*, to which I refer

refer you, ſince it wou'd here be an unneceſſary Repetition; only I ſhall once more obſerve, that the Promiſe of Chriſt was continued in *Noah*, who, as the Toil and Labour of their Hands ſhou'd be ſhorten'd after the Flood, by ſhortening the Lives of his future Race, ſo by the Promiſe of this Redeemer, who was to come of *Noah*'s future Race, there is alſo included in it a Promiſe of a Bleſſedneſs to thoſe that die in the Lord, and a Reſt from their Labours, *&c.*

§. 7. Thus we find, as before obſerv'd from former Paſſages, that Religion and Virtue were continued by *Lamech* and *his* (this) Son *Noah*, as it had been by the former Succeſſion in that Line: But it is reaſonable to doubt, from the Accounts of the *otherwiſe* univerſal Degeneracy, that ſo ſoon after overſpread the Antediluvian World, that the reſt of their Sons and Families became corrupted by the bold and daring Infidelity of the reſt of Mankind, and that there were very few who diſtinguiſhed themſelves from running into that common Current; but thoſe who did preſerve themſelves therefrom, muſt the more deſerve the moſt diſtinguiſhing and valuable Characters to all the future Generations of the Poſtdiluvian World, and alſo then their exemplary and extraordinary Conduct drew down upon them the moſt indulgent Favours and Bleſſings, which are always particularly reſerv'd for the Righteous, when the Wicked,

who

who have been their Devourers before, do come to a general Deſtruction.

Thus it was, that *Noah* was the Perſon fixed upon to eſcape the *otherwiſe* univerſal Overthrow of Mankind, with his Wife, and the three Sons he begat by *her* after he was five hundred Years old. * The others that *Noah* begat, come not within *Moſes*'s Account, from which too it may be naturally imagined, that they were drawn into the Current of Vice with the reſt of the World. But *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japhet*, who were born unto him after he was 500 Years old, we may obſerve, that they in their juvenile Years hearkened to their Father's Inſtructions, and to what he no doubt foretold them wou'd be the End of the reſt of Mankind, that embraced or continued their Degeneracy and Infidelity, and which he alſo forewarn'd the reſt of the World of, as far as his Preaching might be heard, 120 Years before the Flood came upon them: But as this Fore-warning had no Influence upon any of his former Children, any more than upon the reſt of the *then* World, or perhaps upon ſome other Children he might have after them, ſo no more even of his own Family, (which we may ſuppoſe were very numerous in 600 Years,) than himſelf, his Wife, theſe three Sons, and their

* This proves the Reaſonableneſs of my former Hypotheſis, Chap. i. Sect. 3. of this Diſcourſe, that the *Antediluvians* might eaſily be allow'd to have Children to the Age of 520.

their Wives, (for the Sake of their Righteouſneſs) were receiv'd into that particular Favour to eſcape the general Overthrow that he had foretold wou'd come upon the Irreclaimable.

§. 8. Now the religious Worſhip that was practiſed by the Antediluvian Patriarchs, we may obſerve, conſiſted in the Sacrifices and Oblations of their Cattle and Fruits, from the Account we have of *Abel*'s and *Cain*'s Offerings. But the Acceptableneſs of theſe Offerings and Sacrifices, conſiſted in the Sincerity of their Hearts in their Purpoſes of offering them; for where there was not offered therewith an humble and contrite Heart, or an Heart full of Love, Mercy, and Meekneſs, with Gratitude and Submiſſion to God; theſe Sacrifices or Oblations became no Ways acceptable; juſt as our Prayers now, without theſe Qualifications, are only an Abomination, and return Bitterneſs inſtead of Peace and Satisfaction into our own Boſoms.

And that this Practice of the Rites and Ceremonies of Sacrifices and Oblations, was the religious Worſhip of the Antediluvian Patriarchs, to typify the full and ſufficient Sacrifice that the Redeemer of the World ſhou'd make for the Sins thereof, may be farther obſerved, from the firſt Act of Worſhip performed by *Noah* after the Deluge, as in Ch. viii. V. 20. "And *Noah* builded an Altar "unto the LORD, and took of every clean "Beaſt, and every clean Fowl, and offered "Burnt-offerings on the Altar.

This

This is alſo confirmed by the Law which *Moſes* gave to the Children of *Iſrael*, after their Deliverance from *Egyptian* Bondage, by which they had been deprived of this Way of Worſhip. Which he very often repeated to *Pharaoh*, *Let my People go that they may ſerve me*; which when *Pharaoh* at laſt conſented to, but wou'd have had them left their Cattle, *Moſes* utterly refuſes to comply with that; for, ſays he, Ch. x, Ver. 25, and 26. "Thou "muſt give us alſo Sacrifices and Burnt-"offerings, that we may ſacrifice unto the "LORD OUR GOD. Our Cattle alſo ſhall "go with us, there ſhall not an Hoof there-"of be left behind; for thereof muſt we "take to ſerve the LORD OUR GOD, and we "know not with what we muſt ſerve the LORD "until we come thither."

So that it appears, that the Worſhip of the Antediluvian Patriarchs, was the ſame that *Moſes* reſtor'd after it had been loſt during the Bondage of the Children of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*.

§. 9. It is farther obſervable, that *righteous Lamech*, the Father of *Noah*, died 118 Years younger than any of the *Patriarchs* of this Line, as may be ſeen by the foregoing Table, and that his Death was only five Years before the Flood; from which we may naturally conjecture, that the Wickedneſs of the World might give him ſuch Concern and Uneaſineſs of Mind, that their Obſtinacy and Irreclaimableneſs brought upon him a Decay of Nature, contrary to the *then* general Courſe, and that he

he was thereby removed from the World before that dismal Overthrow, since if he had lived, and been preserved therefrom along with his Son *Noah*, &c. it must have caused a great deal of Uneasiness and Reluctancy to him in his old Age, to have seen such a numerous Progeny of his *own*, &c. to have suffer'd; it must therefore be wisely order'd by Providence, even by this natural Cause, to remove him from the beholding of such a Calamity inflicted upon them, which the younger Years of *Noah*, not being much decay'd, cou'd better bear. And that notwithstanding his Father *Methuselah* lived the longest of any of these Patriarchs, yet as it cou'd be of no Service to the Post-diluvian World for him to survive the Deluge, he was also taken away by Death, in the very Year of the Deluge; and as he is said to die in that Year, he must therefore die a common Death, and not be destroy'd by the Deluge.

And tho' his Son *Lamech* died five Years before *him*, they were both taken away from the Evil to come, and only *Noah* and three of his Sons, whom he begat after he was 500 Years old, with his and their Wives, were preserv'd to people the World again.

§. 10. It may also be observed from the 3d Verse of the 6th Chapter of *Genesis*, that *Noah* had a particular Revelation of God's Purpose to destroy the World by a Deluge, 20 Years before his having his three Sons, *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japhet*; wherein we are told,

" And

" And the LORD ſaid, my Spirit ſhall not
" always ſtrive with Man, for that he alſo
" is Fleſh: yet his Days ſhall be an hundred
" and twenty Years.

So that *Noah* had an hundred and twenty Years Warning particularly given *him* of this fatal Overthrow, to confirm the former Relations which his Fore-fathers had given of it, but who, perhaps, had never any Account of the fatal Period before.

In which 120 Years, *Noah* had timely Notice to preach Repentance to the Antediluvian World, and alſo to make Proviſion, as directed by God, for his own Safety, and ſuch of his own Family as wou'd hearken to his prophetic Declarations and Inſtructions.

But the irreclaimable Wickedneſs of the Antediluvian World, which brought this Judgment upon them, I ſhall conſider in my next Chapter, from the Account we have of it in the 6th Chapter of *Geneſis*.

CHAP. VI.

§. 1. IN the 6th Chapter of *Geneſis*, *Moſes* gives us an Account of the Greatneſs of the Wickedneſs that prevailed upon the Earth 120 Years before the Flood, upon which God determin'd to put a Stop thereto, by an univerſal Overthrow of them, and only to preſerve *Noah*, his *three Sons*, and their Wives, who had kept themſelves from engaging

ging in the common Degeneracy and Infidelity, and who were then the only Persons to be distinguished from suffering amongst the rest, there then being Hopes, that their Offspring wou'd probably continue in Virtue and Religion, and teach the Observation thereof to their Posterity, which together with God's Purpose to shorten Men's Lives by Degrees in future Ages, wou'd either occasion them to set themselves to the Practice of such Duties enjoined them, in order to obtain future Happiness; or that such as wou'd not be thereby moved to it, their Time shou'd be so much less, that they shou'd not have the Opportunity of executing their wicked Designs and Purposes with so long-concerted Schemes, as the others had had the Opportunity to do: And hereby the Righteous wou'd be sooner deliver'd from the Toil and Labour of this Life, and be received to an inexpressibly glorious Estate of Blessedness, and a thorough Rest from their Labours; and also those whose Lives were corrupt, shou'd soon be removed from afflicting the Righteous here, and have a less Score of Sins to answer for, when they were so much sooner called to Account.

In the Beginning of this Chapter, Verse the 1st and 2d, *Moses* tells us, "And it came to "pass, when Men began to multiply upon "the Face of the Earth, and Daughters were "born unto them, That the *Sons of God* "saw the Daughters of Men that they were "fair: And they took them Wives of all "that they chose."

§. 2.

§. 2. By this Account we may obſerve, that from the Time that Men began to multiply upon the Face of the Earth, *then* alſo *began* a Diſregard to Religion and Godlineſs; and this muſt be many hundred Years before *Noah* was born; for by the former Accounts it will appear more than probable, that Men ſoon multiplied upon the Face of the Earth, and ſpread upon it accordingly.

Cain, after his Baniſhment from his firſt Eſtabliſhment, ſoon built a City for his own Progeny, and called it by the Name of his firſt Son, which he begat in Exile, and, no doubt, but his Off-ſpring with his Children's he took with him in their Minority, in two or three hundred Years, wou'd fill both Cities, Towns, and Villages; and in the ſame Time his Brothers, younger than him, that were born before *Seth*, and many others after *Seth*, might moſt of them be allow'd a very numerous Progeny.

So that at leaſt in 3 or 400 Years after the Creation, *Men* might be moſt properly ſaid to multiply upon the Face of the Earth.

§. 3. But here appears a Diſtinction between *two* Parties; the *one* of which were called *Men*, who had Daughters born unto them; and the *other*, *the Sons of God*, who choſe them Wives of their Daughters.

And it was now, that that Party called Men, were multiplied upon the Face of the Earth, very probably, more than thoſe who are diſtinguiſhed by the *Character* of the *Sons of God*.

The Party called Men, muſt be ſuch, who if any of their Fore-fathers had ever received the Reſtoration of Religion by *Seth*, that *they* had relinquiſhed it; and the other that are under the Denomination of the Sons of God, were thoſe whoſe Progenitors had not only embraced it themſelves, but had taken Care and Pains to inſtruct their Children therein, and in which they might continue for ſeveral Years of their Manhood.

But, in Proceſs of Time, many of the Children and Deſcendants of theſe religious Fathers began to degenerate, and to make Marriages with the *Daughters off Men*, who had relinquiſhed all Regard of Duty to GOD and their Neighbours; and were therefore looked upon by the Parents of thoſe *Sons of God*, who married their Daughters, as ſuch with whom they ought to have had no Communion: But theſe Children growing from under their immediate Inſpections and Government, and becoming ſmitten with the Beauties of theſe Daughters of Men, and without farther Thought or Enquiry, chuſe them Wives from amongſt them, without making their different Educations and Notions of God and Religion, any Barriers to decline it, and inſtead of theſe Wives being brought to a Regard for the Religion of their Huſbands, their Huſbands are perſuaded by theſe Wives to relinquiſh that Share of Religion, which might have before remained in them from their Education; for their chuſing them

Wives

Wives amongſt theſe *Daughters of Men*, Virtue was not the Inducement, but becauſe they were *fair*.

Hence reſtored Religion began again to loſe Ground, which ended in a fatal Period; for it was ſoon reduced to remain only in the Fathers, who firſt embrac'd its Reſtoration, whoſe Children had been diſtinguiſhed with the *Character* of the *Sons of God*: Which Character might probably be given them in Deriſion, by thoſe who made a Mock at their Regard to any Religion or Worſhip of GOD, having none to any themſelves, and therefore looked upon ſuch as had, to be Men of affected Singularity, which thro' their Apprehenſions of a future State, abridged themſelves of the free Indulgencies and Liberties, which they enjoy'd of their ſenſual Delights. And hereupon it ſeems to be, that the Children of theſe religious Fathers were ſtiled in Ridicule, by theſe Children of Men, the *Sons of God*.

§. 4. Now that this religious Worſhip was alſo embraced and practiſed upon its Reſtoration by *Seth*, by ſome of the Deſcendants of *Cain*, I think very probable, from the Account that we have of his Deſcendants to the 7th Generation from *Adam*. For we may obſerve the Inventions and Improvements of ſeveral liberal and mechanical Arts and Sciences amongſt them, which cou'd not be carried on without ſome reaſonable Government, and

no Government cou'd be carried on without ſome religious Eſtabliſhment, without which, all the muſical Inſtruments, *&c.* that it is poſſible for the Art of Man to invent, cou'd never be able to preſerve any Society from Diſorder, Diſcord, and Confuſion; for where Regard to Religion is once univerſally relinquiſhed, it muſt be impoſſible *there* to preſerve any Harmony or Tranquillity, or any tolerable Government or Society: And then muſt ſucceed Deſtruction and Ruin, if not from an immediate Appointment of Providence, yet, from the very Nature of the Cauſe, Ruin and Deſtruction do naturally ſucceed Confuſion, Diſorder, and Diſcord.

But that this was not the Caſe amongſt *Cain*'s Poſterity, any ſooner than amongſt the reſt of Mankind, may appear from their Encreaſe, and a Form of Government amongſt themſelves, that influenced them to live mutually, and in regular Order and Diſcipline in their ſeparate Poſſeſſions, ſo as to build Cities, *&c.* and agreeably trade together.

And the firſt Deviation from a good and agreeable Oeconomy amongſt them, that we are informed of, was in *Cain*'s ſixth Deſcendant, in arrogating to himſelf *two* Wives; but at what Age of the World this happened, we have no Account, becauſe the Ages of the Fathers, from whom this *Lamech* ſprung, are not recorded when, or at what Ages they begat them, as they are in *Adam*'s Line to *Noah*.

But

But as *Lamech* in *Cain*'s Line was the ſeventh from *Adam*, ſo *Enoch* in *Seth*'s Line was the ſeventh from *Adam* in the Line to *Noah*; and tho' there might be ſome hundreds of Years difference between the Births of *Enoch* and *Lamech*, from the Difference of the Ages of their Progenitors, when they begat their Children in theſe different Lines, yet it is almoſt without Doubt, that *Lamech* might be cotemporary with *Enoch*, or be both living at one and the ſame Time, tho' their diſtant Abodes might prevent any perſonal Acquaintance or Correſpondence, but what might be communicated by Letters or News, from one Part of the World to another; which we may reaſonably imagine was more readily *then* convey'd than now: For then, we have no Information of different Languages, nor of the Seas preventing the Earth's being travelled over on dry Land, and add to this their *then* longer Lives, and that Men cou'd not *then* live to ſuch Ages without finding out Ways and Means of Communications to different Plantations, and probably better and readier than we have now.

And whatever Degeneracy there might be before *Lamech* in *Cain*'s Poſterity, *he* was the firſt that we are acquainted with, who broke the ſolemn Engagements of matrimonial Contracts between *one* ſingle Male, and *one* ſingle Female, *at* one Time, and from whence enſued, as has been before obſerv'd, his diſmal Quarrel, and Slaughter of two Men.

§. 5. This Degeneracy then, we may reaſonably conclude, was begun ſeveral hundred Years before it became ſo almoſt univerſal upon the Face of the Earth, and that there were Multitudes of Infidels, who were kept in Subjection to Governments, wherein Diſcipline, and ſome Degree of Order and Decorum were preſerved, till in the Year of the World 1546, or 120 Years before the Deluge, in which Wickedneſs and Infidelity had its full Progreſs throughout all Generations, except ſome few of the *ancient Fathers*, with *Noah*, his three *Sons*, and their Wives; and it is obſervable, that thoſe ancient Fathers, who had preſerved themſelves from this Degeneracy, were taken away by Death in the laſt 120 Years of the old World, from ſuffering in the Deſtruction executed upon that degenerate Race.

How long this Degeneracy had been begun and gradually carried on, we can only judge of, as before noted, from the Time that Men *began* to multiply upon the Face of the Earth; or when the Earth was pretty well ſtocked with Inhabitants, *then* did *that* Religion begin again to loſe its Efficacy, which *Seth* had reſtored, from the bold and daring Ridicule of thoſe who made ſenſual Enjoyments their chief End of being *Men*, and who thought Scorn to dedicate themſelves to any Exerciſes but ſuch only as related to their ſenſual Pleaſures, upon which they valued themſelves as MEN; *Men*, not to be affected by the fu-

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ture Expectations of Puniſhments and Suffe-rings for the Exerciſe of their preſent Enjoy-ments, and Gratifications of the Deſires that their Manhood called them to.

For they might thus encourage themſelves: "Let thoſe who mind Religion, enjoy the Fruits "that will reſult to them from their Practice "of it: But let us diſtinguiſh them from us, "(*Men*) by the Character of the *Sons of God*, "and laugh them to Scorn for denying them-"ſelves thoſe indulgent Sweets conſequent up-"on our Liberties, and Unconcernedneſs about "their random *Hereafters*: We experience the "Pleaſures of our own liberal Gratifications, and "are reſolved to ſhew ourſelves MEN; *Men* of "Honour and undaunted Courage and Reſolu-"tion, to enjoy whatſoever our Hearts can in-"vite our Deſires after: And let thoſe poor in-"ſignificant Religioniſts, *the Sons of God*, whom "we deſpiſe, ſet their Hearts and Affections up-"on their Dreams of future Enjoyments, while "we enjoy our preſent pleaſing Gratifications, "and of which we have laſting Views; we "feel no Decay of Nature, our Conſtitutions are "ſtrong and laſting, and far from Diſſolution; "and if the Time ſhall ever overtake us that "we can no longer enjoy our Senſualities, it will "be enough for us *then* to begin to recollect "ourſelves, and to think of Religion *, but till

 "then,

* This might well enough be their Way of Reaſoning *then*, as it has been, and ſtill is, too much made Uſe of now, ſince the ſhortneſs of the Lives of the *Poſtdiluvians* cannot deter many Men from the ſame Way of Reaſoning.

" then, let *us* ſhew our ſelves MEN, and let " the *Sons of God* till *then* enjoy their Religion " to themſelves. "

And thus theſe *Sons of God* began to be banter'd out of their Religion, and to embrace thoſe Pleaſures which reſulted from the preſent Objects of Senſation, and *then* to make Marriages with the Daughters of *theſe Men*, and to take them Wives of ſuch as they choſe *for their outward Beauties*, not Virtues, and then wholly to devote themſelves, as the reſt of the depraved World, to the preſent Enjoyments of their voluptuous Deſires and Carnalities.

Then began a Diſregard to the mutual and happy Enjoyment, that could only be obtain'd by the Truth, Loyalty, and Conſtancy between *one* Male and *one* Female *only*; ſo that Polygamy and random Acts of promiſcuous Generation began to be looked upon as Performances of Manhood and Nobleneſs; ſo that they, who could engroſs the greateſt Plurality of Wives, were to be the moſt eſteemed as the braveſt and moſt conſummate Heroes, being eſteemed the moſt honourable for their taking the moſt Wives, that they choſe for their Beauties.

Upon which, this Degeneracy becoming near univerſal, we are told,

Verſe 3. " And the Lord ſaid, My Spirit " ſhall not always ſtrive with Man, for that " he alſo is Fleſh: Yet his Days ſhall be 120 " Years. "

§. 6. Here

§. 6. Here we may obſerve the Operations of God's Spirit with Man, to ſtir up that Exerciſe of natural Reaſon, which God had at firſt implanted in the Soul, to be a continual Monitor, and an Evidence, which ſhould witneſs to his Conſcience, and give either Peace and Satisfaction, or an inward Terror, and a wounded Spirit, according as he ſhould govern himſelf thereby, or reject theſe inward Admonitions and boldly oppoſe all inward Inclinations to Virtue, and, contrarily thereto, ſet up the vicious Deſires of the Fleſh, as the Standard whereby to engage againſt it, and ſo to ſeek for Satisfaction where Reaſon and Conſcience, if adhered to, would aſſure him that it is not there to be met with.

But when Men become hardened againſt the Dictates of Reaſon and Conſcience, enſtamped upon the Mind by the Spirit of God, by a long Series of Reſiſtances to its Admonitions, *then* muſt the Influences and Operations of the Spirit of God ceaſe to work upon ſuch hardened Rebels, who, in malicious Oppoſition thereto, have reſolutely choſe to be governed only by their ſenſual Dictates and carnal Inclinations.

And from ſuch God's Spirit, loſing its healing Efficacy and Influence, muſt naturally withdraw, ſince there are not any Springs left to receive Life and Motion therefrom: Hence *God is ſaid* to withdraw his Spirit from Man; or, that his Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with Man, in the common and ordinary Methods

of

of leaving all Men free Agents; for his Spirit is ſo beſtowed upon all Men, that they may chuſe to embrace it; but forced upon none, ſo that they cannot reſiſt or refuſe it; therefore all have not only the Offer, but a Power given them, to make their own Choice, whether they will be governed by the Spirit of God, or that Reaſon and Conſcience God had in common implanted in them, or by the Dictates of the Fleſh, which, ſince *Adam*'s Fall, wars againſt the Spirit.

§. 7. But now God finding ſuch a Degeneracy amongſt Mankind, that the Dictates of their Reaſon and Conſcience, by the Influences of his holy Spirit, are no longer naturally embraced, but univerſally oppoſed, unleſs by a very ſmall Exception, he determined to ſuffer their Impieties no longer than 120 Years more, and therefore foretells *righteous Noah*, who had kept himſelf from Infidelity and the Vices of the reſt of the World, the very Time when a common Deſtruction ſhould come upon them for their Wickedneſs, and directs him afterwards alſo, how to prepare to preſerve himſelf, *&c.* from that common Deſtruction that ſhould come upon the reſt of the World, with whom the good Influences of the Operations of his Spirit had been loſt, becauſe they had obſtinately choſe to be govern'd by their fleſhly Gratifications.—" For that he alſo is " Fleſh;" or has wholly devoted himſelf to carnal and ſenſual Enjoyments, till his Ways are become ſo corrupt and abominable, that nothing

nothing but Selfiſhneſs and Violence remains: The Actions therefore of Mankind are become unſufferable, being intolerable even to one another; and as nothing but Diſorder and Confuſion could be conſequent upon their Practices, God, even in Mercy, determines to put a final Stop to their unſufferable Impieties; the Effects of which muſt neceſſarily have brought a confuſed Deſtruction upon them, if God had not, by an immediate Interpoſition inflicted an univerſal Overthrow of them *all* together, to ſave them the Trouble of deſtroying one another; In which alſo there could not have wanted the accumulated Sins of Wrath and Malice, which are Concomitants of all Acts of Violence, with which the old World was filled; Verſes 11th and 13th. So that when the Earth was thus filled with Violence, God, in Mercy, diſappoints their future Acts of Wrath and Malice, in their Deſtruction of one another, by a total Overthrow of them altogether: And thereby, inſtead of their dying in their Heats of Rage and Malice by one another, they might, during the ſhort Time they enjoy'd after they ſaw the certain Deſtruction coming upon them all at once, and which they had been forewarned of; I ſay, they might moſt probably employ that ſhort Time much better in repenting of their Wickedneſſes, and their Infidelities of the Warnings they had had of it, which had brought upon them this diſmal Overthrow, and then convince them of their former Fol-

lies,

lies, even in theſe laſt Agonies. But I ſhall ſpeak more particularly to this in the next Chapter, when I come to treat of Chriſt's Preaching to the Spirits in Priſon, which were ſometime diſobedient in the Days of *Noah*.

§. 8. Verſe 4. "There were Giants in the "Earth in thoſe Days; and alſo after that, "when the *Sons of God* came in unto the "*Daughters of Men*, and they bare Children "unto them, the *ſame* became mighty Men, "which were of old *Men* of *Renown*."

Now thoſe Days, in which there is ſaid to be Giants, it appears that this was before the *Sons of God* came in unto the Daughters of Men; for it is ſaid, that after there were Giants, "*the Sons of God* came in unto the Daughters "of Men, who bare Children unto them, "who *alſo* became mighty Men (or, perhaps, "alſo Men of gigantic Stature) which were "of *old* Men (alſo) of Renown.

Now, we may from hence reaſonably conclude, that theſe Men [Giants] from this Relation of them, that they were begotten out of the common way of Single Marriages, and thro' voluptuous and extraordinary luſtful and ungovernable Paſſions, not directed by the Laws of God and Reaſon; and therefore as God had at firſt eſtabliſh'd a Law in Nature, whereby Effects ſhould ſucceed Cauſes, ſo this Eſtabliſhment in the Courſe of Nature muſt continue, and Effects from Cauſes muſt naturally ſucceed; and as this ungovernable Paſſion of Luſt prevailed, ſo the Effects enſued of having

having an Iſſue of an uncommon and out of Size Proportion.

So alſo when the *Sons of God took to them Wives of the Daughters of Men*, it appear'd to be thro' an uncommon Affectation, which they had to their Beauties, by which they loſt the Maſtery of that regular Love, which Virtue is the Procurer of; for where Beauty *only* is the Inducement, it only raiſes a more than ordinary Propenſity after the Fruition of their Embraces, whereby their Off-ſpring became *mighty Men*, or Fierce, and Commanders of Submiſſion; and perhaps too of uncommon Sizes, and were thereupon honoured and ſubmitted to by ſuch who had not the Strength, nor were of ſo violent Tempers as themſelves, and ſo were at leaſt, by Flattery, honoured as Men of Renown, not for their Virtues (becauſe we have no Account of any belonging to them) but from the Terror that their arbitrary Injunctions brought upon thoſe who were obliged to comply therewith *.

§. 9. For,

* The whole Earth being now filled with Violence, without the Reſtraint of Law or Juſtice exerciſed amongſt Mankind, Rapin and Murders daily encreaſe, and nothing but exorbitant Power prevails, in which Juſtice has no Hand; ſo that ſo much Violence and murdering of one another occaſions the Divine Power to put a Stop to ſuch ungovernable Proceedings: As the firſt Sin of Man's Poſterity we have Account of was the heinous Sin of Murder, ſo it appears thet this Sin at laſt became ſo predominantly prevailing, that the whole Earth was filled with Violence: But as no Law had been given for Men to execute Death upon Murderers before the Deluge, ſo when the

§. 9. For, Verſe 5. "God ſaw that the "Wickedneſs of Man was great in the Earth, "and *that* every Imagination of the Thoughts "of his Heart was *only* Evil continually.

Verſe 6. "And it repented the Lord that "he had made Man on the Earth, and it "grieved him at his Heart.

Now here are Expreſſions exactly correſponding to our preſent Objects of Senſe and natural Faculties and Paſſions, which tho' they are not in God ſo as in us, yet that it may appear to our Capacities according to our Apprehenſions of Things, we have it thus repreſented in our own Dialect.

"And

the whole were probably become Murderers, either in Act or Deſire, Death was, by God's *Mercy* and *Juſtice*, executed upon all together to put a ſtop to the tragical, malicious, and tyrannical Violences and Murderings of one another without Law or Juſtice. And this appears to be the Reaſon why the firſt Law God gave to Man after the Flood was, That whoſoever (hereafter) ſhould ſhed Man's Blood, *by Man* ſhould his Blood be ſhed, being convicted thereof in an appointed Court of Judicature, to prevent the ſpreading of that Contagion in the After-Race of Mankind; for, before, God had only reſerved the Lives of all Men in his own Hands, and had left it only to his own Power and Juſtice to puniſh thoſe as he thought proper, who ſhould make Infringements upon his Rights; and now as he had puniſhed the whole by a general Deluge for their Crimes, either in Act or Deſign, ſo hereafter he made it an Act of Juſtice amongſt Mankind, to execute ſuch Malefactors who ſhould hereafter be guilty of ſuch Acts of Violence, which had then occaſion'd the common Deſtruction of the whole together.

" And God ſaw that the Wickedneſs of " Man was great in the Earth," &c. As if he ſhould take a natural Proſpect or Survey to inform himſelf of the Ways and Manners of Mankind, and from thence to conſider how to proportion Rewards or Puniſhments, according as he obſerved their Deſerts; and indeed the common Methods which he has appointed, in ordering the Courſe of Nature, do always ſo far correſpond to reward Virtue and puniſh Vice, that it may be ſaid to be done by the immediate Appointment of his providential Diſpenſations; as is moſt particularly viſible in all Communities, Commonwealths, and Kingdoms, which are generally proſperous and flouriſhing, or ruinous and in Bondage, according as they have Regard to Religion and Virtue, or become Slaves to Irreligion and Vice: So that it is equally the ſame to us as if God ſhould, at all Times, interpoſe to bring it about by an immediate Power, ſince, in his ordering the Courſe of Nature, he has providentially appointed ſuch Effects to ſucceed ſuch Cauſes.

But where the Cauſes call for an immediate Interpoſition beyond what the Effects will naturally produce, any ways tending to reclaim the Viciouſneſs of either City, Nation, Kingdom, or World; *then*, as before noted, it muſt be a Mercy by an immediate Interpoſition to remove the Cauſe that would produce ſuch fatal Effects.

Thus

Thus when the Wickedneſs of Men became unſufferable, and, it is ſaid, that "it repented "the Lord that he had made Man," &c. ſo this repreſented Repentance in God is very correſpondent to our Way of reaſoning: For, as at this Time, Man's Wickedneſs was grown unſufferable, ſo God determines to deſtroy the whole human Race, except *Noah* and ſome of his Family, as the Effects of his Repentance of making Man: Juſt as if we ſhould make a Work which we expect Satisfaction from, but, contrary to our Expectations, it proves reverſe therefrom, upon this Diſapprobation of our own Work, we preſently determine to deſtroy it, or to turn it to ſome other Purpoſe, and relinquiſh the Hopes we firſt framed of receiving that Satisfaction therefrom, which at firſt we might flatter our ſelves with the Hopes of.

This, I ſay, we may take as a Metaphor ſpoke to our preſent Conceptions, becauſe agreeable to our Ways of proceeding with one another: But the juſt and equitable Ways of God, we muſt wait to ſee into more fully in a future State; for here we may be ſatisfied that they will then appear to be all tranſacted with the utmoſt Juſtice, Mercy, and Goodneſs, whether in his Diſpenſations of temporal Favors or Judgments, and that they have all been proportion'd as they would beſt anſwer the Welfare of his Creatures in Common.

The

The Subſtance of the 7th, and to the 12th Verſe of this Chapter, being ſynonymous with what has been before, and will hereafter be conſidered from the two next Verſes, I ſhall proceed to

§. 10. Ver. 12, and 13. "And *God* looked "upon the Earth, and behold it was corrupt: "For all Fleſh had corrupted his Way upon the "Earth: And *God* ſaid unto *Noah*, The End "of all Fleſh is come before me; for the "Earth is filled with Violence thro' them: "And behold I will deſtroy them with the "Earth." Or, as it is in the Margin of the Bible, *from the Earth*.

But it is to be obſerved, as in Verſe the 8th, That *Noah found Grace in the Eyes of the* LORD, becauſe, Verſe 9. "He was a juſt "Man and perfect (or upright) in his Gene-"ration, and walked with God."

Therefore God eſtabliſhed a Covenant with him, to preſerve *him*, with *three of his Sons and their Wives*, from that fatal Deſtruction, which he foretold him he would bring upon the whole human Race beſides; and that neither Man, Beaſt, nor Fowl ſhould eſcape, becauſe of the Wickedneſs of *Mankind*, but only thoſe that he ſhould appoint him to take into his own Habitation, which he ſhould direct him to make for *his* and *their* Security.

And now the *religious Patriarchs* were all dead, and all their Progeny, except the above excepted, were drawn into the common Cur-

rent of Infidelity; and there was nothing then for them to gain any Expectations from by Fraud and Deceit, as there had been, while Honesty and Religion kept any Ground; for, when there were none left to be thus overcome, then must open Force and Violence be employ'd against each other, to effect the Ends of their contrived Schemes, with the most premeditated Rage and implacable Malice and Fury.

And thus was Wickedness *then* grown to that contagious Infection, that there being none innocent to be over-reached by hypocritical Cants, every one's Design against another must be carried on, and succeed according as their secret Stratagems were more or less artfully contrived, or as by their Power and Strength they should be able to overcome each other.

So that Confusion must necessarily attend such hellish Disorder and ungovernable Anarchy, and where the whole Earth's Inhabitants, except some few, were concern'd in it, *then* must the Earth be filled with Violence, and bring upon itself a most shocking Destruction, if their original Superintendant, whose tender Mercies are constantly over all his Works, had not by a timely Destruction of them all together, prevented their destroying of one another; and, by such a Destruction from their Maker, it might bring Multitudes of them to a confused Repentance, which would be better than to have died in Rage and Malice by,

and

and with one another; ſince this muſt have been more fatal to them in a future State, than the Impriſonments of their Spirits in an hopeleſs State of Redemption, till the Preaching of Chriſt to their Spirits in Priſon, after he had died for the Redemption of the World; of which in the next Chapter.

CHAP. VII.

Of Chriſt's Preaching to the Spirits in Priſon, 1 Pet. Chap. iii. Ver. 18, 19, & 20.

" FOR Chriſt alſo hath once ſuffered for " Sins, the Juſt for the Unjuſt (that he " might bring us to God) being put to Death " in the Fleſh, but quickened by the Spirit.— " By which alſo he went and preached unto " the Spirits in Priſon. —Which ſometime " were diſobedient, when once the Long-ſuf- " fering of God waited in the Days of *Noah*, " while the Ark was preparing, wherein a " few, that is, eight Souls, were ſaved by " Water."

§. 1. In all the Diſpenſations of Providence, and God's Inflictions of Puniſhments upon his Creatures, or in his neceſſary Corrections of them for vicious Practices, he never cou'd have any Views to pleaſe and gratify himſelf by his inflicting ſuch Corrections or Puniſhments; nor can there flow any Satisfaction or Pleaſure to him by the Exerciſe of his divine Power,

and abſolute and uncontroulable Authority, in the neceſſary Corrections or Puniſhments which he inflicts upon them.

§. 2. If then the Good of thoſe, upon whom Corrections or Puniſhments are inflicted, was not the ſole Aim and End of God's Purpoſe in the diſpenſing of them, they wou'd not be at any time inflicted, either in a natural or ſupernatural Way.

But as Man has involved himſelf and Poſterity in manifold Inconveniencies and Vanities, by his Relapſe from his original Purity, ſo the Oeconomy and Harmony of the primitive State of the Creation is thereby become diſordered, and the firſt ſweet Streams of the Current of Nature are quite reverſed, and turned to troubleſome Waves, to toſs us about, till they ſhall at laſt weary us of our inchanting Chains, that wou'd invite us rather to continue in our Shackles than to ſeek for Liberty.

§. 3. So that it became abſolutely neceſſary for Mankind to be ſubjected by that contrary Current in Nature, and that ſuch Evils ſhou'd be conſequent upon ſuch Vices as their natural Reſult.

Thus Vice does naturally carry with it an inherent Diſſatisfaction upon the Mind of its Practicers, in Oppoſition to its inchanting Charms, to draw back and diſſuade the Practicers of it from its Allurements, ſince it always entails a Puniſhment adequate to its Degree of Heinouſneſs, as a natural Effect from

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an efficient Cauſe; and this, in common Affairs, always attends the preſent reverted Current from the firſt concordant Streams of uncorrupted Nature.

§. 4. So when extraordinary Puniſhments, which attend or come upon extraordinary Wickedneſſes, whether the Puniſhments proceed from a ſecondary, or ſupernatural Power and Authority, they are always ſo ordered or ſent, that they either tend to reclaim the Puniſhed, or are for Warnings to others to ſhun their vile Practices, and ſo to eſcape their Puniſhments, or for both.

For God is both good and merciful in all his Diſpenſations with his Creatures; and it is juſt to be ſo; and that it is, and ever was ſo with God, will at laſt be made appear to the whole univerſal Creation of them.

And which all reaſonable Men may at preſent be convinced of, ſince his Love has been ſo infinitely extended to his Creatures, that when *Man* had involved himſelf in a Guilt, from which it was impoſſible for him to have been redeemed by any Corrections or Puniſhments, that his Guilt had naturally involved him in; yet God, even *then*, did not leave him in that State of Miſery, which the Effects of his Diſobedience had expoſed him to, but ſent his only *Son* into the World to take Man's Nature upon him, and in an human Body to perfect that Obedience, that was at firſt required of Man, and after a Life of Holineſs, Mercy, Juſtice, and Goodneſs,

to ſuffer Death, due *only* to Sin, that he might thereby atone for the Offences of *Man*'s Diſobedience: "So that as by the Offence of "*one*, *Judgment came* upon all Men to Con-"demnation; ſo, by the Righteouſneſs of *one*, "the *Free-Gift came* upon all Men unto Ju-"ſtification of Life." *Rom.* Ch. v. Ver. 18.

§. 5. Now as Judgment came upon *all* Men, thro' the Offence of *one* to Condemnation, *all* Men have a Right to that Juſtification of Life, from that *Free-Gift*, whereby the Righteouſneſs of ONE, who ſuffered for the Offence of the *other*, has made Way for a Reconciliation for all Mankind, who were, thro' that *one*, bound over to Condemnation, and put all thoſe into the Way of Juſtification, who will not obſtinately and maliciouſly oppoſe the *Means* whereby the Covenant of Reconciliation is confirmed to them; and therefore it cou'd not be a Mercy, but an Injuſtice, if thoſe who ſhou'd wilfully reject ſuch Offers of Mercy, were not corrected for their Abuſe of it; and if they continued irreclaimable for their Abuſe of it, by Corrections, it is ſtill a Mercy to inflict ſuch Puniſhments as may bring them to Repentance for their Stubbornneſs, or elſe to put a Stop to their bringing into the World ſuch a future *Race*, who, thro' their Examples, might grow quite irreclaimable.

§. 6. Now, tho' it is common for ſuch Men, who the moſt joyfully embrace the Offers of this Mercy of Juſtification, and who

endeavour

endeavour to regulate their Lives in Oppoſition to the depraved Inclinations of their Natures, and ſtrive "to do to all Men, as they deſire "they ſhou'd do to them:" I ſay, tho' it is common for ſuch Men to undergo the moſt outward Afflictions in this Life, and tho' it is frequently ſeen, that they who have the leaſt Regard to Virtue, are the moſt outwardly proſperous, yet a ſecret Diſſatisfaction will be a Puniſhment that will naturally attend a vicious Mind, and bring upon it greater Evils than all the outward Evils and Afflictions that fall upon the Virtuous, ſince their inward Tranquillity will allay their outward Sufferings, and ſome Way or other tend to their future Good, and ſometimes in *this* as well as the next Life: For here their outward Sufferings may confirm them in Virtue, and free them from the natural Conſequences of dreading future Puniſhments from vicious Practices.

While ſuch, who will not be reclaimed by that inward Diſſatisfaction of Mind which attends vicious Practices, make it their Study to prey upon the Innocent, and, by Injuſtice to make an Advantage of their Honeſty and upright Purpoſes, and by Deceit, they for ſometime flouriſh here upon the Ruin of the Juſt and Harmleſs; ſo that the juſt Man, here, is generally expoſed to ſuffer Injuſtice.

§. 7. But where Wickedneſs quite overſpreads either City, Nation, Kingdom, or World, ſo that there is none innocent amongſt them to be found to be taken with the uſual

Bait of Hypocriſy, and to be thereby defraud-ed or over-reached, then every one's Deſign againſt another, muſt ſucceed according as the one ſhall act more or leſs ſkilfully in their Knaveries; for in ſuch a Caſe, there is none to regard an outward hypocritical Shew of Virtue, by which, thoſe that had been influ-enced by it, had formerly been taken in to their Detriment, if not to their *temporal* Ruin; but where all Men have caſt off a Regard to Religion, none can be caught with that Bait, ſo that nothing *then* but open Force, or ſome ſecret Stratagems and Violence, can gain the Maſtery, which Vice and Wickedneſs will al-ways influence Men in ſome Shape or other to contend for.

And when Wickedneſs is *thus* grown con-tagiouſly rampant, whether in Nation, King-dom, or World, and the Wicked find none to defraud or over-reach, then every one's De-ſign againſt another muſt ſucceed according as their ſecret Stratagems are more or leſs artfully contrived, or as by their Power and Strength they ſhall be able to overcome.

Then muſt Confuſion enſue, and an utter Extirpation of them become even neceſſary; and if no common Deſtruction of them was inflicted by the immediate Hand of God up-on ſuch a Nation, Kingdom, or World, their very Actions wou'd naturally cauſe ſuch a Scene of Calamities, as wou'd inevitably bring upon themſelves a more ſhocking Over-throw; as was the Caſe of the *Jews* in the

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Deſtruction of that once famous City of *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of the irreclaimable Infidelity and Wickedneſs of almoſt all its Inhabitants; ſo that only a ſmall Remnant eſcaped in that diſmal Confuſion and Depopulation.

For when a City, Nation, Kingdom, or World, ſhall by their Wickedneſs and Infidelity bring themſelves into ſo deſperate a Caſe, it muſt be a Mercy that God, who has the Diſpoſal of all Men's Lives in his own Hands, ſhould rather by a total Overthrow of them at once put a Period to their farther Violences, than any longer permit their outrageous Proceedings againſt one another, together with the incenſed Fury of their Enemies, to extinquiſh their Race.

Thus the Overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gommorrah* by Fire, was a Puniſhment become neceſſary, to put a Period to their farther Iniquities and irreclaimable Wickedneſſes; but ſtill that was not ſent or order'd by God, to gratify or pleaſe his arbitrary Authority; nor are we to imagine, that the whole Inhabitants of thoſe Cities were from thence ſent to ſuffer his eternal Vengeance; we may more readily conclude, that God even hereby ſent this temporal Puniſhment upon them, while there was Room to ſee, that there were many of them at leaſt, that might thereby be deliver'd from eternal Sufferings; for tho' they did not regard the Prediction pronounced by *Lot* againſt them, yet upon ſeeing the Deſtruction coming upon them, which, in all Probability they

they might foreſee as we do a Tempeſt, but found no Means to eſcape it, that this wou'd ſhock them with a ſudden Horror, and raiſe in them a ſort of Repentance, which, though but ſhort and confuſed, yet it wou'd be the beſt they cou'd then make, and without which they might never have made any at all; and may we not hope that it might leave Room for the Exerciſe of God's Mercy and Forgiveneſs in their future State, when they had ſuffered here for the Fruits of their Wickedneſs, and that in this Execution of their temporal Deſtruction, Mercy was thereby intended, which wou'd certainly be extended to all ſuch, as by that Puniſhment were become qualify'd to receive it?

This we may obſerve from our bleſſed Saviour's own Words, when he pronounced Woes to *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, who, after they had ſeen his miraculous Works, and muſt thereby be inwardly convinced of the Truth of his Miſſion, yet rejected the Offers of his Mercy, and choſe, againſt clear Conviction, maliciouſly to oppoſe them, and outwardly to maintain their Infidelity, for fear of becoming cenſured by one another, for their open Profeſſion of their inward Belief: Upon which Account *Chriſt* tells them, that "it "wou'd be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* "in the Day of Judgment than for them; "for, ſaid he, if the mighty Works which "have been done in *you*, had been done in "*Tyre* and *Sidon*, they wou'd have repented

"long

" long ago in Sackcloth and Aſhes." *Matt.* Ch. xi. Ver. 21.

So alſo Ver. 23. " Had the mighty Works " which were done in *Capernaum*, been done in " *Sodom*, it wou'd have remained to this Day."

Thus *Pharaoh* and all his Hoſt, who periſhed in the Sea, was an Example of God's Juſtice and Judgments to make his *Power* known throughout all the Earth; but, as I ſaid, from the ſudden Executions of temporal Deſtructions, we are not to infer that theſe Sufferers are *therefore* to be deliver'd over to eternal Sufferings, becauſe they have been made Examples for their Wickedneſs; I ſay, we cannot infer, that becauſe God has here inflicted temporal Deſtruction upon a wicked Nation, *&c.* that therefore that Nation or People ſhall be the eternal Monuments of his Wrath, and ſuffer eternal Torments.

The Wrath and Vengeance of God, ſo frequently mention'd in the Scriptures, is chiefly eſtabliſhed in the Courſe of Nature, which God has ſo fitly framed to be the Reward of Virtue, or Puniſhment of Vice, from the very Nature of the Conſequences that attend their original Eſtabliſhment: And as God has eſtabliſhed this Order to ſucceed in the common Courſe of Nature, to preſerve a due Oeconomy therein, ſo it is common amongſt Men, and according to our Way of reaſoning, to aſcribe the Puniſhments which fall upon the Wicked, to the Wrath and Vengeance of God; and eſpecially when ſuch Puniſhments happen amongſt

amongſt them, wherein the common Courſe of Nature ſeems not to be concerned: But, as I ſaid, God acts not thro' any wrathful arbitrary Power, nor can any Delight or Satisfaction accrue to him in either the judicial or natural Puniſhments, which he appoints or ſends, but they muſt be with a View to preſerve the Sufferers from future Puniſhments; and where they cannot take this Effect upon them, we may conclude that their future Sufferings will be adequate to their contracted Habits of Vice unrepented of, as an inſeparable Conſequence thereof, eſtabliſhed in the Order of natural Cauſes, which neceſſarily flow from ſuch Effects; ſo that when Vice becomes irreclaimable by Corrections or Puniſhments in this Life, it will carry that everlaſting Sting in the Soul, that the Terrors thereof cou'd hardly be augmented by future real Inflictions.

God has in this Life therefore ſo ordered it, that *Vice* ſhall always carry a Sting to return into the Boſom of every Practicer of it, and that *Virtue* ſhall pleaſe and delight the Minds of thoſe who purſue it; that we may be deterred from the Practice of the *one*, and encouraged in the Practice of the *other*: But where Vice is not hereby reſtrain'd, and alſo becomes every way irreclaimable through the Inhabitants of a whole City, Nation, Kingdom, or World, then it becomes neceſſary, and is a Mercy from God, to put a Stop to their future Proceedings, and by ſome natural, or ſupernatural Deſtruction, to make them

Exam-

Examples to others, and alſo to reclaim as many as ſhall poſſibly be thereby reclaimable, from eternal Torments.

§. 8. Thus when the Wickedneſs of the Antediluvian World was become irreclaimable by ordinary Methods, God, in Mercy, by one total Overthrow of the whole human Race, except *Noah*, *&c.* as above, puts a Period to their inhuman Violences and Uſages of one another: And tho' *Noah* had forewarned them of this threatened Deſtruction, and they regarded it not, yet may we not reaſonably conclude, that upon the Approach of the Deluge they would be infallibly convinced of their former Folly, Infidelity, and wicked Practices; and find Time no longer for any Thing but Remorſe, and ſuch a Repentance which they could then, in Confuſion, exerciſe under their Struggle with Death?

And thus their Spirits being forced out of their Bodies in ſuch Diſorder and Confuſion, we may reaſonably conclude, that upon their Entrance into the ſpiritual World, they would be filled with Surprize and Amazement, by finding themſelves in another State, which they had caſt off the Belief and Expectation of, as well as of the Promiſe of a Redeemer, who would himſelf be Juſt, and yet die for the Unjuſt.

And as they died alſo without this Knowledge or Expectation, ſo muſt they be deſtitute of the Hopes of Redemption from that State, which this Death had delivered them over to, in their *then* Separation of Soul and Body:

Body: In which Eſtate, we may obſerve from the Words of St. *Peter*, that their Souls or Spirits remain'd in a darkened and impriſoned Mind, without Hope of Ranſom.

Now amongſt ſuch Multitudes of Inhabitants that were upon the Earth, when the Deluge came upon them, there muſt be vaſt Numbers of innocent Infants who would be hereby deprived of being brought up in a Courſe of Wickedneſs, and thereby die innocent of actual Guilt; and that, as before noted, the greateſt Numbers of Men and Women, if not all, would die in Remorſe, as well as Surprize; ſo that there is no Reaſon to ſuppoſe, but that their temporal Puniſhments were adapted for their future Pardon; and that upon their Entrance upon another State, by Death, tho' they had not any Knowledge, or Hope of their Redemption from this Priſon of Death, by a Reſurrection from the Grave; yet when our bleſſed Saviour had ſuffered Death, due to Sin, " He was quickened " by the Spirit, by which he alſo went and " preached unto the Spirits in Priſon; which " were ſometime diſobedient, when once the " Long-ſuffering of God waited in the Days " of *Noah*, while the Ark was a preparing, " wherein few, that is eight Souls, were ſaved " by Water."

Now what this Preaching of *Chriſt* to theſe Spirits in Priſon might be, we may beſt judge from the Deſign of his Miſſion, and the End of his Sufferings; *The Juſt for the Unjuſt, that he might bring us to God.* For *Chriſt* having

having thus ſuffered, he went and preached to thoſe Spirits in Priſon, to raiſe in them an Hope which they had loſt, and to give them an Aſſurance, that tho' by their Diſobedience they had loſt the Knowledge and Hope of their Redemption, and had hitherto remain'd under the Impriſonment of a darkened and hopeleſs Mind, of ever being delivered from that State of Separation of Soul and Body, which their ſuddain Deſtruction had hurried them into; but now that *he had taſted Death for every Man*, he came to aſſure ſuch of them, as had either been free from actual Tranſgreſſions, or ſuch as, by the Views of their approaching Deſtruction had repented of their vile Practices, that occaſioned their Overthrow: I ſay, as we may reaſonably conclude, he went and aſſured them, by this his preaching to them, That he had now compleated their Redemption; and that they had now no longer Occaſion to lie under that Impriſonment of Mind, and without a Knowledge that he had ranſomed their Spirits from that Ignorance of their Deliverance, which they had hitherto been under, and proclaimed to them the Redemption that his Sufferings had procured, and would procure, both for them and all Mankind.

Tho' this Preaching of *Chriſt* to the Spirits in Priſon might not be only (yet ſeems chiefly to relate) to thoſe who ſuffered the total Overthrow by the Deluge, ſince St. *Peter* particularly mentions thoſe, *who were ſometime diſobedient in the Days of* Noah.

And

And theſe having been involved in ſuch groſs Infidelity and Wickedneſs, we may very well conclude, had caſt off all Expectations of a future State; but tho' they had found themſelves deceived and diſappointed, in finding their immaterial Spirits ſtill in Exiſtence, contrary to their Expectations, in a Separation from their material Organs; yet they ſhould alſo, tho' hitherto they had been ignorant of it, and could ſee into no farther Exiſtence than that which they then had found themſelves in; I ſay, yet they ſhould now be delivered from that Darkneſs and Impriſonment of Mind, by the Aſſurance he came to give them of their Redemption from their preſent State, into which they had thus unexpectedly entered.

§. 9. Upon Conſideration of this melancholy Subject of the Overthrow of the old World for their Infidelity and Wickedneſs, I am ſorry there ſhould be any now-a-days, in ſo mean a way of thinking, or who cannot, or rather will not, believe thoſe Declarations of the Scriptures, which teſtify to us that we ſhall have a future Exiſtence: Theſe (tho' I truſt there are few ſuch) might as well, and as reaſonably believe, that they have not any Exiſtence now, as that they ſhall not have *one* hereafter.

That which makes Men ſo fond of this Ignorance, muſt be their Unwillingneſs to change their *preſent* State for one they cannot here have a clear Idea of; and thro' ſome ſecret Vices, which they are not willing to forſake, they dread to be puniſhed for hereafter, *if* they

they ſhould find a future Exiſtence; and therefore ſooner than they will relinquiſh their darling Vices, they will rather chuſe to embrace that Deluſion, than to comply with thoſe extenſive Offers of Mercy to all Penitents and Reformers.

Nay, it is but too obſervable, that theſe Deluders of themſelves more frequently delude others, than others can perſuade them to throw off their Deluſions; and by the Account our Saviour has foretold of his Coming to Judgment, Infidelity will be the Occaſion of the laſt and final Cataſtrophe of this Heaven and Earth; ſince this Infidelity, becoming univerſal, will bring upon the whole Earth (inſtead of another Deluge) a general Conflagration; when it will be high Time to convince them of their Infidelity, by manifeſting the Truth of his Declarations, and ſhewing them altogether that themſelves are now brought to a State, which they by their vicious Lives endeavoured to perſuade themſelves into the Diſbelief of.

But I earneſtly wiſh that both they, and all Men, who are any ways involved in this way of thinking, may be convinced of their Infidelity before their Vices ſhall render them incapable of receiving any Pleaſure, but Horror from their Convictions; that none of the Fruits of that univerſal Redemption, CHRIST has ſo dearly purchaſed, may become *fruitleſs* to any of the whole Creation. *Amen.*

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